Alexander Louis Ricardo

with the best wishes of his friend

Albert J. Lyttelton

on his leaving Eton

Election 1860

# The Worthy Communicant:

OR,

*A Diſcourſe of the Nature, Effects, and Bleſſings conſequent to the Worthy Receiving of*

# The Lord's Supper;

And of all the Duties required in order to a Worthy Preparation.

Together with

THE CASES OF CONSCIENCE OCCURRING IN THE DUTY OF HIM THAT *Miniſters*, AND OF HIM THAT *Communicates*.

As alſo

Devotions fitted to every part of the Miniſtration.

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# THE Worthy Communicant

A DISCOURSE OF THE NATURE EFFECTS
AND BLESSINGS CONSEQUENT
TO THE WORTHY RECEIVING OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER

BY JEREMY TAYLOR D.D.

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To the moſt Illuſtrious Princeſs

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS MARY

PRINCESS OF GREAT BRITAIN,

DOWAGER OF ORANGE,

&c.

MADAM,

*ALTHOUGH none of the Subjects of theſe Nations can in propriety of ſpeaking, be a ſtranger to the Royal Family, from whom every ſingle perſon receives the daily Emanations of many Bleſſings; yet beſides this, there is much in your Royal Highneſs, by which your Princely Perſon is related to all amongſt us that are or would be excellent. For where Virtue is in her exaltation, to that excellent Perſon all that are, or would be thought Virtuous do Addreſs themſelves, either to be directed or encouraged, for Example or for Patronage, for the ſimilitude of Affection or likeneſs of Deſign: and therefore,* Madam, *although it is too great a confidence in me, ſomething a Stranger, to make this Addreſs to ſo High-born and Great a Princeſs; yet when I conſidered that you are the Siſter of my* King, *and the Servant of my God, I*



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*knew there was nothing to be expected but Serenity and Sweetneſs, Gentleneſs and Goodneſs, Royal Favours and Princely Graces; and therefore in ſuch fruitful ſhowers, I have no cauſe to fear that my Fleece ſhall be dry, when all that is round about it ſhall be made irriguous with your Princely Influence. I ſhall therefore humbly hope, that your Royal Highneſs will firſt give me Pardon, and then accept this humble Oblation from him who is equally your Servant, for your great Relations, and for your great Excellencies: For I remember with what pleaſure I have heard it told, that your Highneſs's Court hath been in all theſe late days of ſorrow a Sanctuary to the afflicted, a Chapel for the Religious, a Refectory to them that were in need, and the great Defenſative of all Men, and all things that are Excellent; and therefore it is but Duty, that by all the acknowledgements of Religion, that Honour ſhould be paid to your Royal Highneſs which ſo eminent Virtues perpetually have deſerved. But becauſe you have long dwelt in the more ſecret receſſes of Religion, and that for a long time your Devotion hath been eminent, your Obedience to the ſtricteſt Rules of Religion hath been humble and diligent, even up to a great example, ana that the Service of God hath been your great Care, and greateſt Employment; your Name hath been dear and highly honourable amongſt the Sons and Daughters of the Church of* England; *and we no more envy to* Hungary *the great Name of St.* Elizabeth,

*to* Scotland *the glorious Memory of St.* Margaret, *to* France *the Triumph of the Piety of St.* Genoveſe, *nor St.* Catherine *to* Italy; *ſince in your Royal Perſon we have ſo great an Example of our own, one of the Family of Saints, a Daughter to ſuch a Glorious Saint and Martyr, a Siſter to ſuch a King, in the Arms of whoſe Juſtice and Wiſdom we lie down in ſafety; having now nothing to employ us, but in holineſs and comfort to ſerve God, and in Peace and mutual Charity, to enjoy the Bleſſings of the Government under ſo great, ſo good a* King.

*But, Royal* Madam, *I have yet ſome more perſonal ground for the Confidence of this Addreſs; and becauſe I have received the great Honour of your Reading and uſing divers of my Books, I was readily invited to hope, that your Royal Highneſs would not reject it, if one of them deſired upon a ſpecial title to kiſs your Princely Hand, and to pay thanks for the gracious reception of others of the ſame Cognation. The ſtyle of it is fit for Cloſets, plain and uſeful; the matter is of the greateſt concernment, a Rule for the uſage of the greateſt ſolemnity of Religion: For as the Euchariſt is by the venerable Fathers of the Church called the* Queen of Myſteries, *ſo the worthy Communicating in this, is the moſt Princely Conjugation of Graces in the whole Roſary of Chriſtian Religion; and therefore the more proportioned and fitted for the handling of ſo Princely a Perſon, whom the beauty of*

*the Body, and the greatneſs of Birth, and excellency of Religion, do equally contend to repreſent excellent and illuſtrious in the eyes of all the World.*

Madam, *It is neceſſary that you be all that to which theſe excellent Graces and Diſpoſitions do deſign you: and to this glorious end, this* Manual *may, if you pleaſe, add ſome moments; the effecting of which is all my deſign, except only that it is intended, and I humbly pray that it may be looked upon, as a teſtimony of that greateſt Honour, which is paid you by the hearts and voices of all the Religious of this Church, and particularly of,*

MADAM,

Your Highneſs's moſt humble

and moſt Devoted Servant,

JEREMY DUNENSIS.

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# THE INTRODUCTION.

WHEN St. *Joſeph* and the Bleſſed Virgin Mother had for a time loſt their moſt Holy Son, they ſought him in the Villages, and the High-ways, in the Retinues of their Kindred, and the Caravans of the *Galilean* Pilgrims; but there they found him not: At laſt, almoſt deſpairing, faint and ſick with travel and fear, with deſires and tedious expectations, they came into the Temple to pray to God for conduct and ſucceſs; knowing and believing aſſuredly, that if they could find God, they ſhould not long miſs to find the *Holy Jeſus*, and their Faith deceived them not: For they ſought God, and found him that was God and Man in the midſt and circle of the Doctors. But being ſurprized with trouble and wonder, they began a little to expoſtulate with the Divine Child, why he would be abſent ſo long, and leave them (as it muſt needs be when he is abſent from us) in ſorrow and uncertain thoughts? This queſtion brought forth an anſwer, which will be for ever uſeful to all that ſhall enquire after this Holy Child: For as they

complained of his abſence, ſo he reproved their ignorance: How is it that you have ſo fondly look'd for me, as if I were uſed to wander in unknown paths without ſkill, and without a Guide? Why did ye enquire after me in High-ways, and Village-fields? Ye never knew me wander, or loſe my way, or abide but where I ought; why therefore did ye not come hither to look for me? *Did ye not know that I ought to be in my Father's houſe?* that is, There where God is worſhipped, where he loves to dwell, where he communicates his bleſſing and holy influences: there, and there only we are ſure to meet our deareſt Lord.

For this reaſon, the place of our addreſs to God, and holy converſation with him, he is pleaſed to call *his Houſe*, that with confidence we may expect to meet him *there*, when we go to worſhip; and when the Solemnities of Religion were confined to the Tabernacle; he therefore made it to be like a houſe of uſe and dwelling, that in that figure he might tell us, where his delight and his abode would be; and therefore God furniſhed the Tabernacle with the Utenſils of a Prophet's room at leaſt, a Table and a Candleſtick; and the Table muſt have Diſhes and Spoons, Bowls and Covers belonging to it; the Candleſticks muſt have Lamps, and the Lamps muſt be continually burning. And beſides this, the Houſe of God muſt have in it a continual fire, the fire muſt not go out by night nor day; and to this the Prophet alludes, [God] *hath his fire in Sion, and his hearth, or furnace in Jeruſalem:* And after all, there muſt be Meat in

his Houſe too. And as this was done by the Sacrifices of Old, ſo by the Lord's Supper in the New Teſtament: So that now it is eaſie to underſtand the place and the reaſon of Chriſt's abode; even in his Father's Houſe, there where his Father dwells; and loves to meet his Servants; there we are ſure to find the Lord. For as God deſcended and came into the Tabernacle, inveſted with a Cloud; ſo Chriſt comes to meet us, clothed with a Myſtery: He hath a Houſe below as well as above; here is his dwelling, and here are his Proviſions; here is his Fire, and here his Meat; hither God ſends his Son, and here his Son manifeſts himſelf; the Church, and the Holy Table of the Lord, the Aſſemblies of Saints, and the Devotions of his People, the Word and the Sacrament, the Oblation of Bread and Wine, and the Offering of our ſelves, the Conſecration and the Communion, are the things of God, and of Jeſus Chriſt; and he that is employed in theſe, is there where God loves to be, and where Chriſt is to be found; in the Employments in which God delights, in the Miniſtries of his own Choice, in the Work of the Goſpel, and the Methods of Grace, in the Oeconomy of Heaven, and the Diſpenſations of eternal Happineſs.

And now, that we may know where to find him, we muſt be ſure to look after him; he hath told us where he would be, behind what Pillar, and under what Cloud, and covered with what Veil, and conveyed by what Miniſtry, and preſent in what Sacrament; and we muſt not look for

him in the High-ways of Ambition and Pride, of Wealth or ſenſual Pleaſures; theſe things are not found in the Houſe of his Father, neither may they come near his Dwelling. But if we ſeek for Chriſt, we ſhall find him in the Methods of Virtue, and the Paths of God's Commandments; in the Houſes of Prayer, and the Offices of Religion; in the Perſons of the Poor, and the Retirements of an afflicted Soul: we ſhall find him in Holy Reading and Pious Meditation, in our Penitential Sorrows, and in the time of Trouble, in Pulpits, and upon Altars, in the Word, and in the Sacraments: If we come hither as we ought, we are ſure to find our Beloved, him whom our Soul longeth after.

Sure enough Chriſt is here, but he is not here in every manner, and therefore is not to be found by every Enquirer, nor touched by every Hand, nor received by all Comers, nor entertained by every Gueſt. He that means to take the Air, muſt not uſe his Fingers, but his Mouth; and he that receives Chriſt, muſt have a Proper, that is, a ſpiritual Inſtrument, a purified Heart, conſecrated Lips, and a hallowed Mouth, a Tongue that ſpeaks no Evil, and a Hand that miniſters to no Injuſtice, and to no Uncleanneſs: For a diſproportionate Inſtrument is an undecency, and makes the effect impoſſible both in Nature and Morality. Can a man bind a thought with Chains, or carry imaginations in the Palm of his Hand? Can the Beauty of the Peacock's Train, or the Eſtrich Plume, be delicious to the Palat and the

Throat? Does the hand intermeddle with the joys of the heart? Or darkneſs that hides the naked, make him warm? Does the Body live, as does the Spirit? Or can the Body of Chriſt be like to common food? Indeed the Sun ſhines upon the good and bad; and the Vines give Wine to the Drunkard, as well as to the Sober man: Pirates have fair Winds, and a calm Sea, at the ſame time when the juſt and peaceful Merchant-man hath them. But although the things of this World are common to good and bad, yet Sacraments and ſpiritual Joys, the Food of the Soul, and the Bleſſing of Chriſt, are the peculiar Right of Saints; and the Rites of our Religion are to be handled by the Meaſures of Religion, and the things of God by the Rules of the Spirit; and the Sacraments are Myſteries, and to be handled by Myſtick Perſons, and to be received by Saints; and therefore, whoever will partake of God's Secrets, muſt firſt look into his own; he muſt pare off whatſoever is amiſs, and not without Holineſs approach to the Holieſt of all Holies; not eat of this Sacrifice with a defiled Head, nor come to this Feaſt without a Nuptial Garment, nor take this Remedy without a juſt Preparative. For though in the firſt motions of our Spiritual Life, Chriſt comes alone and offers his Grace, and enlivens us by his Spirit, and makes us begin to live, becauſe he is good, not becauſe we are; yet this great myſterious Feaſt, and Magazine of Grace and glorious Mercies, is for thoſe only that are worthy; for ſuch only who by their co-operation with the Grace of God, are Fellow-

workers with God in the Laboratories of Salvation. The Wreſtler that *Clemens* of *Alexandria* tells us of, addreſſing himſelf to his contention, and eſpying the Statue of *Jupiter Piſæus*, prayed aloud: If all things, O *Jupiter*, are rightly prepared on my part; if I have done all that I could do, then do me Juſtice, and give me the Victory: And this is a Breviate of our Caſe. *He that runneth in races*, ſaith the Apoſtle, he that contends for Maſtery, *is temperate in all things;* and this at leaſt muſt he be that comes to find Chriſt in theſe Myſteries; he muſt be prepared by the Rules and Method of the Sanctuary: There is very much to be done on his part, there is an heap of Duties, there is a ſtate of Excellency, there are Preparations ſolemn and leſs ſolemn, ordinary and extraordinary, which muſt be premiſed before we can receive the Myſterious Bleſſings, which are here not only conſign'd, but collated and promoted, confirmed and perfected.

The Holy Communion, or Supper of the Lord, is the moſt ſacred, myſterious and uſeful Conjugation of ſecret and Holy Things and Duties in the Religion. It is not eaſie to be underſtood, it is not lightly to be received: It is not much opened in the Writings of the New Teſtament, but ſtill left in its myſterious Nature: It is too much untwiſted and nicely handled by the Writings of the Doctors, and by them made more myſterious; and like a Doctrine of Philoſophy, made intricate by Explications, and difficult by the aperture and diſſolution of Diſtinctions. So we ſometimes eſpy

a bright cloud formed into an irregular figure, when it is obſerved by unſkilful and fantaſtick Travellers; looks like a Centaur to ſome, and as a Caſtle to others: Some tell, that they ſaw an Army with Banners, and it ſignifies War; but another wiſer than his fellow, ſays, it looks for all the world like a Flock of Sheep, and foretells Plenty; and all the while it is nothing but a ſhining Cloud, by its own mobility, and the activity of a wind caſt into a contingent and inartificial ſhape: So it is in this great Myſtery of our Religion, in which ſome eſpy ſtrange things which God intended not, and others ſee not what God hath plainly told: Some call that part of it a Myſtery which is none: And others think all of it nothing but a meer Ceremony and a Sign: Some ſay it ſignifies, and ſome ſay it effects: Some ſay it is a Sacrifice, and others call it a Sacrament: Some Schools of Learning, make it the Inſtrument of Grace in the Hand of God: Others ſay, that it is God himſelf in that Inſtrument of Grace: Some call it venerable, and others ſay, as the vain men in the Prophet, that *The Table of the Lord is contemptible:* Some come to it with their Sins on their Head, and others with their Sins in their Mouth: Some come to be cured, ſome to be quickned: Some to be nouriſhed, and others to be made alive: Some out of fear and reverence take it but ſeldom, others out of devotion take it frequently: Some receive it as a means to procure great Graces and Bleſſings, others as an Euchariſt, and an Office of Thankſgiving for what they have

received: Some call it an Act of Obedience meerly, others account it an excellent Devotion, and the exerciſing of the Virtue of Religion: Some take it to ſtrengthen their Faith, others to beget it, and yet many affirm that it does neither, but ſuppoſes Faith before hand as a diſpoſition; Faith in all its degrees, according to the degree of Grace whither the Communicant is arrived: Some affirm the Elements are to be bleſſed by prayers of the Biſhop, or other Miniſter; others ſay, it is only by the myſtical words, the words of Inſtitution: and when it is bleſſed, ſome believe it to be the natural Body of Chriſt: Others, to be nothing of that, but the Bleſſings of Chriſt, his Word and his Spirit, his Paſſion in repreſentment, and his Grace in real exhibition: And all theſe men have ſomething of Reaſon for what they pretend; and yet the words of Scripture, from whence they pretend, are not ſo many as are the ſeveral pretenſions.

My purpoſe is not to diſpute, but to perſwade; not to confute any one, but to inſtruct thoſe that need; not to make a noiſe, but to excite devotion; not to enter into curious, but material enquiries, and to gather together into an union all thoſe ſeveral portions of truth, and differing apprehenſions of myſteriouſneſs, and various methods and rules of Preparation, and ſeemingly oppoſed Doctrines, by which even good men ſtand at diſtance, and are afraid of each other: For ſince all Societies of Chriſtians pretend to the greateſt eſteem of this, above all the Rites or external Parts and Miniſ-

teries of Religion, it cannot be otherwiſe, but that they will all ſpeak honourable things of it, and ſuppoſe holy things to be in it, and great bleſſings one way or other to come by it; and it is contemptible only among the prophane and the atheiſtical; all the innumerable differences which are in the diſcourſes, and conſequent practices relating to it, proceed from ſome common Truths, and univerſal Notions, and myſterious or inexplicable words, and tend all to reverential thoughts, and pious treatment of theſe Rites and holy Offices; and therefore it will not be impoſſible, to find honey or wholeſom dews upon all this variety of Plants; and the differing opinions, and ſeveral underſtandings of this Myſtery which (it may be) no humane underſtanding can comprehend, will ſerve to excellent purpoſes of the Spirit; if like men of differing intereſt, they can be reconciled in one Communion, at leaſt the ends and deſigns of them all can be conjoyned in the deſign and ligatures of the ſame reverence, and piety, and devotion.

My purpoſe therefore is to diſcourſe of the nature, excellencies, uſes, and intention of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Bleſſings and Fruits of the Sacrament, all the advantages of a worthy Communion, the Publick and the Private, the Perſonal and the Eccleſiaſtical, that we may underſtand what it is that we go about, and how it is to be treated. I ſhall account alſo concerning all the Duties of Preparation, ordinary and extraordinary, more and leſs ſolemn; of the Rules and Manners of deportment in the receiving; the Geſ-

ture and the Offering, the Meaſures and Inſtances of our Duty, our comport and converſation in and after it; together with the caſes of conſcience that ſhall occur under theſe Titles reſpectively, relating to the particular matters.

It matters not where we begin; for if I deſcribe the excellencies of this Sacrament, I find it engages us upon matters of Duty; and enquiries practical: if I deſcribe our Duty, it plainly ſignifies the greatneſs and excellency of the Myſtery: The very notion is practical, and the practice is information; we cannot diſcourſe of the Secret, but by deſcribing our duty; and we cannot draw all the lines of duty, but ſo much duty muſt needs open a Cabinet of Myſteries. If we underſtand what we are about, we cannot chooſe but be inveſted with fear and reverence; and if we look in with fear and reverence, it cannot be but we ſhall underſtand many Secrets. But becauſe the natural order of Theology is by Faith to build up good Life, by a rectified underſtanding to regulate the Will and the Affections, I ſhall uſe no other method, but firſt diſcourſe of the excellent Myſtery, and then of the duty of the Communicant, direct and collateral.

# CHAPTER I.

## *Of the Nature, Excellencies, Uſes, and Intention of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.*

### SECTION I.—*Of the ſeveral Apprehenſions of Men concerning it.*

WHEN our Bleſſed Lord was to nail the Hand-writing of Ordinances to his Croſs, he was pleaſed to retain two Ceremonies, Baptiſm and the Holy Supper: that Chriſtians may firſt Waſh, and then Eat; Firſt, be made clean, and then eat of the Supper of the Lamb; and it cannot be imagined, but that this ſo ſingular and peculiar retention of two Ceremonies is of great purpoſe and remarkable Virtues. The matter is evident in the inſtance of Baptiſm; and as the Myſtery is of the Foundation of Religion, ſo the Virtue of it is inſerted into our Creed, and we all *believe one Baptiſm for the remiſſion of our ſins;* and yet the action is external, the very Myſtery is by a Ceremony, the Alluſion is bodily, the Element is water, the Miniſter a ſinful man, and the effect is produced out of the Sacrament in many Perſons, and in many inſtances as well as in it; and yet that it is effected alſo by it and with it; in the conjunction with due

diſpoſitions of him that is to be baptized, we are plainly taught by Chriſt's Apoſtles, and the Symbols of the Church.

But concerning the other Sacrament, there are more diviſions and thoughts of heart; for it is never expreſly joyned with a word of promiſe; and where mention is made of it in the Goſpels, it is named only as a Duty and a Commandment, and not as a Grace or Treaſure of Holy Bleſſings; we are bidden to do it, but promiſed nothing for a reward; it is commanded to us, but we are not invited to obedience, by conſideration of any conſequent Bleſſing; and when we do it, ſo many holy things are required of us, which as they are fit to be done, even when we do not receive the Bleſſed Sacrament; ſo they effect Salvation to us by virtue of their proper and proportioned Promiſes in the Virtue of Chriſt's Death, however apprehended and underſtood.

Upon this account ſome ſay, that we receive nothing in the Bleſſed Euchariſt, but we commemorate many bleſſed things, which we have received; that it is affirmed in no Scripture, that in this Myſtery we are to call to mind the Death of Chriſt; but becauſe we have it already in our mind, we muſt alſo have it in our hearts, and publiſh it in our Confeſſions and Sacramental Repreſentment, and therefore it is not the Memory, but the Commemoration of Chriſt's Death; that as the Anniverſary Sacrifices in the Law were a Commemoration of ſins every year; not a calling them to mind, but a confeſſion of their guilt, and

of our deſerved puniſhment; ſo this Sacrament is a Repreſentation of Chriſt's Death by ſuch Symbolical Actions, as himſelf graciouſly hath appointed: but then, excepting that to do too is an act of obedience; it exerciſes no other virtue; it is an act of no other grace; it is the inſtrument of no other good; it is neither virtue nor gain, grace nor profit. And whereas it is ſaid to confirm our Faith, this alſo is ſaid to be unreaſonable; for this being our own Work, cannot be the means of a Divine Grace; *not naturally*, becauſe it is not of the ſame kind; and Faith is no more the natural effect of this obedience, than Chaſtity can be the product of Chriſtian Fortitude; *not by Divine appointment*, becauſe we find no ſuch order, no promiſe, no intimation of any ſuch event; and although the thing it ſelf indeed ſhall have what reward God pleaſe to apportion to it, as it is obedience; yet of it ſelf it hath no other worthineſs; it is not ſo much as an Argument of perſwaſion; for the pouring forth of Wine can no more prove or *make Faith*, that Chriſt's Blood was poured forth for us, than the drinking the Wine can effect this perſwaſion in us, That we naturally, though under a Veil, drink the natural Blood of Chriſt; which the Angels gathered as it run into golden Phials, and Chriſt multiplied to a Miracle, like the Loaves and Fiſhes in the Goſpel. But becauſe nothing that naturally remains the ſame in all things as it was before, can do any thing that it could not do before; the Bread and Wine which have no natural change, can effect none; and

therefore we are not to look for an Egg, where there is nothing but order, and a Bleſſing where there is nothing but an action, and a real effect where there is nothing but an Analogy, a Sacrament, a Myſtical Repreſentment, and ſomething fit to ſignifie, and many things paſt, but nothing that is to come. This is the ſenſe and diſcourſe of ſome Perſons that call for an expreſs word, or a manifeſt reaſon to the contrary, or elſe reſolve that their belief ſhall be as unactive, as the Scriptures are ſilent in the effects of this Myſtery. Only theſe men will allow the Sacraments to be, *Marks of Chriſtianity, Symbols of mutual Charity, Teſtimonies of a thankful mind to God, allegorical Admonitions of Chriſtian Mortification, and Spiritual Alimony, Symbols of Grace conferred before the Sacrament, and Rites inſtituted to ſtir up Faith by way of Object and Repreſentation;* that is, occaſionally and morally, but neither by any Divine or Phyſical, by natural or ſupernatural Power, by the Work done, or by the Divine Inſtitution. This indeed is ſomething, but very much too little.

But others go as far on the other hand and affirm, that in the Bleſſed Sacrament we receive the Body and Blood of Chriſt; we chew his Fleſh, we drink his Blood; *For his Fleſh is Meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed,* and this is the *Manna* which came down from Heaven; our Bodies are nouriſhed, our Souls united to Chriſt; and the Sacrament is the infallible Inſtrument of pardon to all perſons that do not maliciouſly hinder it; and it produces all its effects by virtue of the Sa-

crament it ſelf ſo appointed; and that the diſpoſitions of the Communicants are only for removing obſtacles and impediments; but effect nothing: The ſumption of the Myſteries does all in a capable ſubject, as in Infants who do nothing, in Penitents who take away what can hinder; for it is nothing but Chriſt himſelf, the Body that died upon the Croſs, is broken in the hand of him that miniſters, and by the Teeth of him that communicates; and when God gives us his Son in this divine and glorious manner, with heaps of Miracles, to verifie heaps of Bleſſings, how ſhall not he with him give us all things elſe? They who teach this Doctrine, call the Holy Sacrament, *The Hoſt, the unbloody Sacrifice, the Fleſh of God, the Body of Chriſt, God himſelf, the Maſs, the Sacrament of the Altar.* I cannot ſay that this is too much, but that theſe things are not true; and although all that is here ſaid, that is of any material benefit and real Bleſſing is true; yet the Bleſſing is not ſo conferred, it is not ſo produced.

A third ſort of Chriſtians ſpeak indefinitely and gloriouſly of this Divine Myſtery; they ſpeak enough, but they cannot tell what; they publiſh great and glorious Effects, but ſuch which they gather by Similitude and Analogy; ſuch which they deſire, but cannot prove; which indeed they feel, but know not whence they do derive them; they are bleſſings which come in company of the Sacraments, but are not always to be imputed to them; they confound Spiritual Senſes with Myſtical Expreſſions, and expound Myſteries to natural

Significations: that is, They mean well, but do not always understand that part of Christian Philosophy, which explicates the secret nature of this Divine Sacrament; and the effect of it is this, that they sometimes put too great confidence in the Mystery; and look for impresses which they find not; and are sometimes troubled, that their Experience does not answer to their Sermons, and meet with Scruples instead of Comforts, and doubts instead of Rest, and anxiety of mind in the place of a serene and peaceful Conscience. But these Men, both in their right, and in their wrong, enumerate many glories of the Holy Sacrament, which they usually signifie in these excellent Appellatives, calling it, *The Supper of the Lord, the Bread of Elect Souls, and the Wine of Angels, the Lord's Body, the New Testament, and the Calice of Benediction, Spiritual Food, the Great Supper, the Divinest and Archysymbolical Feast, the Banquet of the Church, the Cœlestial Dinner, the Spiritual, the Sacred, the Mystical, the Formidable, the Rational Table, the Supersubstantial Bread, the Bread of God, the Bread of Life, the Lord's Mystery, the great Mystery of Salvation, the Lord's Sacrament, the Sacrament of Piety, the Sign of Unity, the contesseration of the Christian Communion, the Divine Grace, the Divine making Grace, the Holy Thing, the Desirable, the Communication of Good, the Perfection and Consummation of a Christian, the Holy Particles, the Gracious Symbols, the Holy Gifts, the Sacrifice of Commemoration, the Intellectual and Mystical Good, the Hereditary Donative of the New*

*Teſtament, the Sacrament of the Lord's Body, the Sacrament of the Calice, the Paſchal Oblation, the Chriſtian Paſport, the Myſtery of Perfection, the Great Oblation, the Worſhip of God, the Life of Souls, the Sacrament of our Price and our Redemption;* and ſome few others much to the ſame purpoſes, all which are of great and uſeful ſignification; and if the Explications and conſequent Propoſitions were as juſtifiable, as the Titles themſelves are ſober and uſeful, they would be apt only for Edification, and to miniſter to the Spirit of Devotion. That therefore is to be the deſign of the preſent Meditations, to repreſent the true and proper and myſterious nature of this Divine Nutriment of our Souls; to account what are the Bleſſings God reacheth forth to us in the Myſteries, and what returns of Duty he expects from all to whom he gives his moſt Holy Son.

I ſhall only here add the Names and Appellatives which the Scripture gives to theſe Myſteries, and place it as a part of the Foundation of the following Doctrines: It is by the Spirit of God called, *The Bread that is broken, and the Cup of Bleſſing; the breaking of Bread; the Body and Blood of the Lord; the Communication of his Body, and the Communication of his Blood; the Feaſt of Charity and Love; the Lord's Table, and the Supper of the Lord.* Whatſoever is conſequent to theſe Titles we can ſafely own, and our Faith may dwell ſecurely, and our Devotion, like a pure Flame, with theſe may feed, as with the Spices and Gums, upon the Altar of Incenſe.

## Section II.—*What it is which we receive in the* Holy Sacrament.

IT is ſtrange, that Chriſtians ſhould pertinaciouſly inſiſt upon carnal ſignifications and natural effects in Sacraments and Myſteries, when our Bleſſed Lord hath given us a ſufficient Light to conduct and ſecure us from ſuch miſ-apprehenſions. [The Fleſh profiteth nothing: the words which I ſpeak unto you; they are Spirit, and they are Life,] That is, the Fleſh is corruption, and its ſenſes are Miniſters of Death; and this one word alone was perpetually ſufficient for Chriſt's Diſciples. For when upon occaſion of the groſs underſtanding of their Maſter's Words by the Men of *Capernaum*, they had been once clearly taught, that the meaning of all theſe Words was wholly Spiritual; they reſted there, and inquired no farther: Inſomuch that when Chriſt at the Inſtitution of the Supper affirmed of the Bread and Wine, That they were his Body and his Blood, they were not at all offended; as being ſufficiently before inſtructed in the nature of that Myſtery. And beſides this, they ſaw enough to tell them, what they eat was not the Natural Body of their Lord: This was the Body which himſelf did or might eat with his Body: One Body did eat, and the other was eaten; both of them were his Body, but after a diverſe manner. For the Caſe is briefly this:

We have two Lives, a Natural and a Spiritual, and both muſt have Bread for their ſupport and maintenance, in proportion to their needs, and to their capacities: And as it would be an intolerable Charity, to give nothing but ſpiritual Nutriment to an hungry Body, and pour Diagrams and wiſe Propoſitions into an empty Stomach; ſo it would be as uſeleſs and impertinent, to feed the Soul with Wheat, or Fleſh, unleſs that were the conveyance of a Spiritual Delicacy.

In the Holy Sacrament of the Euchariſt, the Body of Chriſt, according to the proper ſignification of an humane Body, is not at all, but in a ſenſe, differing from the proper and natural Body, that is, in a ſenſe more agreeing to Sacraments; ſo St. *Hierom* expreſly [*Of this Sacrifice which is wonderfully done in the Commemoration of Chriſt we may eat; but of that Sacrifice which Chriſt offered on the Altar, the Croſs*, by its ſelf, *or in* its own nature, *no man may eat:*] *For it is his Fleſh which is under the form of Bread, and his Blood, which is in the form and taſt of Wine: For the Fleſh is the Sacrament of Fleſh, and Blood is the Sacrament of Blood: For by Fleſh and Blood that is inviſible, ſpiritual, intelligible, the viſible and tangible Body of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is conſigned, full of the grace of all Virtues, and of Divine Majeſty.*] So St. Auguſtine. *For therefore ye are not to eat that Body which you ſee, nor to drink that Blood which my Crucifiers ſhall pour out: It is the ſame, and not the ſame, the ſame inviſibly, but not the ſame viſibly.*] *For until the World be finiſhed, the Lord is above,*

*but the Truth of the Lord is with us. The Body in which he roſe again muſt be in one place, but the truth of it is every where diffus'd.*] For there is one Truth of the Body in the Myſtery, and another Truth ſimply and without Myſtery. It is truly Chriſt's Body both in the Sacrament, and out of it; but in the Sacrament it is not the natural Truth, but the Spiritual and the Myſtical.

*And therefore it was that our Bleſſed Saviour, to them who apprehended him to promiſe his natural Body and Blood for our Meat and Drink, ſpake of his Aſcention into Heaven, that we might learn to look from Heaven to receive the Food of our Souls, heavenly and ſpiritual Nouriſhment,* ſaid St. *Athanaſius. For this is the Letter which in the New Teſtament kills him who underſtands not ſpiritually what is ſpoken to him, under the ſignification of Meat and Fleſh, and Blood and Drink:* So *Origen. For this Bread does not go into the Body (for to how many might his Body ſuffice for Meat?) but the Bread of eternal Life ſupports the ſubſtance of our Spirit; and therefore it is not touched by the Body, nor ſeen with the eyes, but by Faith it is ſeen and touched:* So St. *Ambroſe. And all this whole Myſtery hath in it neither carnal ſence, nor carnal conſequence:* ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom.* [*But to believe in Chriſt, is to eat the Bread; and therefore why do you prepare your Teeth and Stomach? Believe him, and you have eaten him*] they are the words of *Auſtin.* For Faith is that intellectual Mouth, as St. *Baſil* calls it, which is within the man, by which he takes in Nouriſhment.

But what need we to draw this water from the

leſſer Ciſterns? We ſee this Truth reflected from the Spring it ſelf, the Fountains of our Bleſſed Saviour, *I am the Bread of Life, he that cometh unto me ſhall not hunger, and he that believeth on me ſhall not thirſt:* and again, *He that eats my Fleſh, hath Life abiding in him, and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day.* The plain Conſequent of which words is this, That therefore this eating and drinking of Chriſt's Fleſh and Blood, can only be done by the Miniſteries of Life and of the Spirit, which is oppoſed to Nature, and Fleſh, and Death. And when we conſider, that he who is not a ſpiritual and a holy Perſon does not feed upon Chriſt, who brings Life eternal to them that feed on him, it is apparent that our Manducation muſt be ſpiritual, and therefore ſo muſt the Food; and conſequently, it cannot be natural Fleſh, however altered in circumſtances and viſibilities, and impoſſible or incredible changes. For it is not in this Spiritual Food, as it was in Manna, of which our Fathers did eat, and died; but whoſoever eats this Divine Nutriment, ſhall never die. The Sacraments indeed and Symbols, the exterior part and Miniſtries may be taken unto Condemnation; but the Food it ſelf never. For an unworthy Perſon cannot feed on this Food, becauſe here to eat Chriſt's Fleſh is to do our Duty, and to be eſtabliſhed in our Title to the poſſeſſion of the eternal Promiſes. For ſo *Chriſt diſpoſed the way of Salvation, not by Fleſh, but by the Spirit*, ſaith *Tertullian;* that is, according to his own expoſition, Chriſt is to be deſired for Life, and to be devoured by Hearing,

to be chewed by the Underſtanding, and to be digeſted by Faith; and all this is the Method and œconomy of Heaven, which whoſoever uſes and abides in it, hath Life abiding in him. He that in this World does any other way look for Chriſt, ſhall never find him; and therefore, *if men ſay, Lo here is Chriſt, or lo there he is in the Deſart, or he is* ἐν ταμείοις, *in the Cupboards* or Pantries, where Bread or Fleſh is lay'd, *believe it not:* Chriſt's Body is in Heaven, and it is not upon Earth: *The Heavens muſt contain him till the time of reſtitution of all things, and ſo long as we are preſent in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord.*

In the mean time we can *taſte* and ſee, that the Lord is gracious, that he is ſweet; but Chriſt is ſo to be taſted, as he is to be ſeen, and no otherwiſe; but here *we walk by Faith*, and *not by Sight*, and here alſo we *live by Faith*, and *not by* mere, or *only Bread*, but from that *Word which proceedeth out from God;* that as Meat is to the Body, ſo is Chriſt to the Soul; the Food of the Soul, by which the Souls of the Juſt do live. He is the Bread which came down from Heaven, the Bread which was born at *Bethlehem*, [the Houſe of Bread] was given to us, to be the Food of our Souls for ever.

The meaning of which myſterious and ſacramental Expreſſions, when they are reduced to eaſie and intelligible ſignifications, is plainly this: By Chriſt *we live and move, and have our* ſpiritual *Being* in the Life of Grace, and in the Hopes of Glory. He took our Life, that we might partake of his; he gave his Life for us, that he might give

Life to us: He is the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, the beginning and perfection of our ſpiritual Life. Every good thought we think, we have it from him; every good Word we ſpeak, we ſpeak it by his Spirit [*for no man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt:*] and all our Prayers are by the aids and communications of the Spirit of Chriſt, *who helpeth our infirmities*, and by unutterable groans, and unexpreſſible repreſentment of moſt paſſionate Deſires, *maketh interceſſion for us*. In fine, all the Principles and Parts, all the Actions and Progreſſions of our Spiritual Life, are Derivations from the Son of God, by whom we are born and nouriſhed up to Life Eternal.

2. Chriſt being the Food of our Souls, he is pleaſed to ſignifie this Food to us, by ſuch Symbols and Similitudes, as his preſent ſtate could furniſh us withal. He had nothing about him but Fleſh and Blood, which are like to Meat and Drink; and therefore what he calls himſelf; ſaying, *I am the Bread of life, he afterwards calls his Fleſh and his Blood*, ſaying, *My Fleſh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed;* that is, That you may perceive me to be indeed the Food of your Souls, ſee, here is Meat and Drink for you, my Fleſh and my Blood; ſo to repreſent himſelf in a way that was neareſt to our Capacity, and in a more intelligible manner, not further from a Myſtery, but nearer to our manner of underſtanding; and yet ſo involved in figure, that it is never to be drawn nearer than a Myſtery, till it comes to Experience, and ſpiritual reliſh and Perception.

But becauſe we are not in darkneſs, but within the fringes and circles of a bright Cloud, let us ſearch as far into it, as we are guided by the Light of God, and where we are forbidden by the thicker part of the Cloud, ſtep back and worſhip.

3. For we have yet one further degree of Charity and manifeſtation of this Myſtery. *The Fleſh* of Chriſt is *his Word; the Blood* of Chriſt is *his Spirit;* and by believing in *his Word*, and being aſſiſted and conducted by *his Spirit*, we are nouriſhed up to Life; and ſo Chriſt is our Food, ſo he becomes Life unto our Souls.

Thus St. *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Tertullian* affirm the Church, in their days, to have underſtood this Myſtery, ſaying, *the Word of God is called Fleſh and Blood:* For ſo the Eternal Wiſdom of the Father calls to *every ſimple Soul, that wanteth Underſtanding, come eat of the Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled:* and that we may know what is this Bread and Wine, he adds, *forſake the fooliſh and live, and go in the way of underſtanding.* Our Life is Wiſdom; our Food is Underſtanding. The *Rabbins* have an obſervation, that when ever mention is made in the Book of the *Proverbs* of *eating* and *drinking*, there is meant nothing but *Wiſdom and the Law;* and when the Doctors, uſing the Words of Scripture, ſay, *Come and eat Fleſh, in which there is much fatneſs*, they would be underſtood to ſay, Come and hear Wiſdom, and learn the fear of God, in which there is great nouriſhment and advantage to our Souls. Thus *Wiſdom is called Water, and Underſtanding*

*Bread*, by the Son of *Sirach* [with the Bread of Underſtanding ſhall ſhe feed him, and give him the Water of Wiſdom to drink.] It is by the Prophet *Iſaiah* called *Water and Wine;* and the deſires of Righteouſneſs are called *Hunger and Thirſt* by our Bleſſed Saviour in his Sermon on the Mount: And in purſuance of this Myſterious Truth, we find that God in his anger threatens a *Famine of hearing the words of the Lord:* when we want God's word, we die with Hunger, we want that Bread on which our Souls do feed. It was an excellent Commentary which the Jewiſh Doctors make upon thoſe words of the Prophet [*with joy ſhall ye draw waters from the Wells of Salvation*] that is, from the choiſeſt or wiſeſt of the juſt men, ſaith *Rabbi Jonathan*, from the Chief Miniſters of *Religion*, the Heads of the People, and the Rulers of the Congregation; becauſe they Preach the Word of God; they open the Wells of Salvation, from the Fountains of our Saviour giving drink and refreſhment to all the People. Thus the Prophet *Jeremy* expreſſes his ſpiritual Joy, and the ſenſe of this *Myſtery; Thy words were found and I did eat them, and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoycing of my heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of Hoſts:* the ſame with that of our Bleſſed Saviour; *My Words are Spirit, and they are Life*, they give life and comfort, they reliſh our Souls, and feed them up to immortality.

*As the Body* or Fleſh of Chriſt is *his Word*, ſo the *Blood* of Chriſt is *his Spirit*, in real effect and ſignification. For as the Body without Blood is

a dead and liveleſs Trunk, ſo is the Word of God without the Spirit, a dead and ineffectual Letter: and this Myſtery we are taught in that incomparable Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. For *by the Blood of Chriſt* we are ſanctified; and yet that which ſanctifies us is the *Spirit of Grace*, and both theſe are one: For ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, *the Blood of Chriſt was offered up for us, for the purification of our Conſciences from dead works;* but this offering was made *through the Eternal Spirit;* and therefore he is equally guilty, and does the ſame impiety, he who does *deſpite to the Spirit of Grace*, and he *who accounts the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing;* for by this *Spirit*, and by this *Blood*, we are ſanctified, by this *Spirit*, and by the *Blood of the Everlaſting Covenant*, Jeſus Chriſt does perfect him in every good Work; ſo that theſe are the ſame Miniſtry of Salvation, and but one and the ſame Oeconomy of God. Thus St. *Peter* affirms, that by the *precious Blood of Chriſt*, we are redeemed from our vain converſation; and it is every where affirmed, that we are *purified and cleanſed by the Blood of Chriſt*, and yet theſe are the expreſs effects of his Spirit: *for by the Spirit* we mortifie the deeds of the Body, and we *are juſtified and ſanctified in the name of our Lord Jeſus by the Spirit of our God.* By which expreſſions we are taught, to diſtinguiſh the natural Blood of Chriſt from the ſpiritual; the Blood that he gave for us, from the Blood which he gives to us: *that* was indeed *by the Spirit*, but was not the ſame thing, but *this* is the Spirit of Grace, and the Spirit of Wiſdom. And there-

fore *as our Fathers were made to drink in one Spirit*, when *they drank of the Water of the Rock;* ſo we alſo partake of the Spirit, when we drink of Chriſt's Blood, which came from the Spiritual Rock when it was ſmitten: For thus according to the Doctrine of St. *John, the Water, and the Blood, and the Spirit are one* and the ſame glorious purpoſes.

*As it was* with our Fathers *in the beginning, ſo it is now* with us, and ſo it *ever ſhall be, World without end:* for they fed upon Chriſt, that is, they believed in Chriſt, they expected his Day, they lived upon his Promiſes, they lived by Faith in him: and the ſame meat and drink is ſet upon our Tables: and more than all this, as Chriſt is the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the World, ſo he ſhall be the Food of our Souls in Heaven, where they *who are accounted worthy ſhall ſit down and be feaſted in the Eternal Supper of the Lamb;* concerning which Bleſſedneſs, our Bleſſed Saviour ſaith, *Bleſſed is he that eateth Bread in the Kingdom of God:* for he hath appointed to his choſen ones, *to eat and drink at his Table in his Kingdom:* plainly teaching us, that by eating and drinking Chriſt, is meant in this World to live the Life of the Spirit, and in the other World it is to live the Life of Glory: here we feed upon Duty, and there we feed upon Reward: our Wine is here mingled with Water and with Myrrh, there it is meer and unmixt: but ſtill it is called Meat and Drink, and ſtill is meant Grace and Glory, the Fruits of the Spirit, and the Joy of the Spirit; that is, by Chriſt we here live a Spiritual Life, and hereafter ſhall live a Life Eternal.

Thus are ſenſible things the Sacrament, and repreſentation of the Spiritual and Eternal, and Spiritual Things are the fulfillings of the ſenſible. But the Conſequent of theſe things is this: that ſince Chriſt always was, is, and ſhall be the Food of the Faithful, and is that Bread which came down from Heaven: ſince we eat him here and ſhall eat him there, our eating both here and there is ſpiritual: only the word of teaching ſhall be changed into the word of Glorification, and our Faith into Charity, and all the way our Souls live a new life by Chriſt, of which, eating and drinking is the Symbol and the Sacrament. And this is not done to make this Myſtery obſcure, but intelligible and eaſie. For ſo the pains of Hell are expreſſed by fire, which to our fleſh is moſt painful: and the joys of God by that which brings us greateſt pleaſure, by Meat and Drink, and the growth in Grace by the natural inſtruments of Nutrition: and the work of the Soul by the Miniſtries of the Body, and the Graces of God by the bleſſings of Nature: for theſe we know, and we know nothing elſe; and but by Phantaſms and Ideas of what we ſee and feel, we underſtand nothing at all.

Now this is ſo far from being a diminution of the glorious Myſtery of our Communion, that the changing all into Spirituality, is the greateſt increaſe of bleſſing in the World: And when he gives us his Body and his Blood, he does not fill our ſtomachs with good things: for of whatſoever goes in thither, it is affirmed by the Apoſtle,

that *God will deſtroy both it and them;* but our hearts are to be repleniſhed, and by receiving his Spirit we receive the beſt thing that God gives: not his liveleſs Body, but his Fleſh with life in it, that is, his Doctrine and his Spirit to imprint it, ſo to beget a living Faith, and a lively Hope, that we may live and live for ever.

4. St. *John* having thus explicated this Myſtery in general, of our eating the Fleſh, and drinking the Blood of Chriſt, added nothing in particular concerning any Sacraments, theſe being *but particular* inſtances of the general Myſtery and Communion with Chriſt. But what is the advantage we receive by the Sacraments, beſides that which we get by the other and diſtinct Miniſteries of Faith, I thus account in general.

The *Word* and the *Spirit* are the *Fleſh* and the *Blood* of Chriſt, that is the ground of all. Now becauſe there are two great Sermons of the Goſpel, which are the ſum total and abbreviature of the whole Word of God, the great Meſſages of the Word incarnate, Chriſt was pleaſed to inveſt theſe two Words with two Sacraments, and aſſiſt thoſe two Sacraments, as he did the whole Word of God, with the preſence of his Spirit, that in them we might do more ſignally and ſolemnly what was in the ordinary Miniſtrations done plainly, and without extraordinary regards.

*Believe and repent:* is the Word in Baptiſm, and there ſolemnly conſigned: and here it is that *by Faith* we feed on Chriſt: for *Faith* as it is oppoſed to Works, that is, the *New Covenant of*

*Faith*, as it is oppoſed to the *Old Covenant of Works*, is the Covenant of Repentance: Repentance is expreſly included in the New Covenant, but was not in the Old; but by Faith in Chriſt we are admitted to the pardon of our ſins, if we repent and forſake them utterly. Now this is the Word of Faith; and this is that which is called the Fleſh or Body of Chriſt, for this is that which the Soul feeds on, this is that by which the juſt do live: and when by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the Waters are reformed to a Divine *Nature* or Efficacy, the baptized are made clean, they are ſanctified and preſented pure and ſpotleſs unto God. This Myſtery St. *Auſtin* rightly underſtood, when he affirmed, that, *we are made partakers of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, when we are in Baptiſm incorporated into his Body, we are baptized in the Paſſion of our Lord;* ſo *Tertullian* to the ſame ſence with that of St. *Paul, we are buried with him by Baptiſm into his Death;* that is, by Baptiſm are conveyed to us all the effects of Chriſt's death: the Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt crucified, are in Baptiſm reached to us by the hand of God, by his Holy Spirit, and received by the hand of man, the miniſtry of a Holy Faith. So that it can without difficulty be underſtood, that as in receiving the Word, and the Spirit illuminating us in our firſt Converſion, we do truly feed on the Fleſh, and drink the Blood of Chriſt, who is the Bread that came down from Heaven; ſo we do it alſo, and do it much more in Baptiſm, becauſe in this, beſides all that was before, there

was ſuper-added a Rite of God's appointment. The difference is only this; That out of the Sacrament, the Spirit operates with the Word in the miniſtry of man; in Baptiſm the Spirit operates with the Word in the miniſtry of God. For here God is the Preacher, the Sacrament is God's Sign, and by it he miniſters Life to us, by the Fleſh and Blood of his Son, that is, by the Death of Chriſt into which we are baptized.

And in the ſame divine Method, the Word and the Spirit are miniſtered to us, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. For as in Baptiſm, ſo here alſo there is a Word proper to the Miniſtry. *So often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye declare the Lord's Death till he come.* This indeed is a word of comfort. *Chriſt died for our ſins;* that is, our Repentance which was conſigned in Baptiſm, ſhall be to purpoſe; we ſhall be waſhed white and clean in the Blood of the ſacrificed Lamb. This is *verbum viſibile;* the ſame word read to the eye and to the ear. Here the Word of God is made our Food, in a manner ſo near to our underſtanding, that our Tongues and Palates feel the Metaphor and the Sacramental ſignification: here Faith is in Triumph and Exaltation: but as in all the other Miniſtries Evangelical, we eat Chriſt by Faith, here we have Faith alſo by eating Chriſt: Thus eating and drinking is Faith, it is Faith in Myſtery, and Faith in Ceremony: it is Faith in Act, and Faith in Habit: it is exerciſed, and it is advanced: and therefore it is certain, that here we eat the Fleſh, and drink the

Blood of Chriſt, with much eminency and advantage.

The ſum is this, Chriſt's Body, his Fleſh, and his Blood, are therefore called our meat and our drink, becauſe by his incarnation and manifeſtation in the Fleſh, he became Life unto us: So that it is myſterious indeed in the expreſſion, but very proper and intelligible in the Event, to ſay that we eat his Fleſh and drink his Blood, ſince by theſe it is that we have and preſerve Life. But becauſe what Chriſt begun in his Incarnation, he finiſhed in his Body on the Croſs, and all the whole progreſſion of Myſteries in his Body, was ſtill an Operatory of Life and ſpiritual Being to us: the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper being a commemoration and exhibition of this Death, which was the conſummation of our Redemption by his Body and Blood; does contain in it a *Viſible Word*, the Word in Symbol and viſibility, and ſpecial manifeſtation. Conſonant to which Doctrine, the Fathers by an elegant expreſſion, call the Bleſſed Sacrament [the Extenſion of the Incarnation.]

So that here are two things highly to be remarked.

1. That by whatſoever way Chriſt is taken, *out of the Sacrament*, by the ſame he is taken *in the Sacrament:* and by ſome ways here, more than there.

2. That the eating and drinking the conſecrated Symbols, is but the Body and leſſer part of the Sacrament: the Life and the Spirit is believing greatly, and doing all the actions of that believing,

direct and conſequent. So that there are in this, two Manducations, the *Sacramental*, and the *Spiritual:* That does but declare and exerciſe this; and of the Sacramental Manducation as it is alone, as it is a Ceremony, as it does only conſign or expreſs the Internal; it is true to affirm that it is only an Act of Obedience: but all the Bleſſings and Conjugations of Joy which come to a worthy Communicant, proceed from that ſpiritual eating of Chriſt, which as it is done out of the Sacrament very well, ſo in it and with it, much better. For here being (as in Baptiſm) a double ſignificatory of the Spirit, a Word, and a Sign of his own appointment, it is certain he will joyn in this Miniſtration. Here we have Bread and Drink, Fleſh and Blood, the Word and the Spirit, Chriſt in all his effects, and moſt gracious Communications.

This is the general account of the nature and purpoſe of this great Myſtery. Chriſtians are ſpiritual men, Faith is their Mouth, and Wiſdom is their Food, and Believing is Manducation, and Chriſt is their Life, and Truth is the Air they breathe, and their Bread is the Word of God, and God's Spirit is their Drink, and Righteouſneſs is their Robe, and God's Laws are their Light, and the Apoſtles are their Salt, and Chriſt is to them all in all, for we muſt put on Chriſt, and we muſt eat Chriſt, and we muſt drink Chriſt: we muſt have him within us, and we muſt be in him: he is our Vine, and we are his Branches: he is the Door, and by him we muſt enter: he is our

Shepherd, and we his Sheep: *Deus meus et omnia:* he is our God, and he is all things to us: that is plainly, he is our Redeemer, and he is our Lord: He is our Saviour and our Teacher: by his Word and by his Spirit he brings us to God, and to Felicities eternal, and that is the ſum of all. For greater things than theſe we can neither receive nor expect: But theſe things are not conſequent to the reception of the natural Body of Chriſt, which is now in Heaven; but of his Word and of his Spirit, which are therefore indeed his Body and his Blood, becauſe by theſe we feed on him to Life Eternal. Now theſe are indeed conveyed to us by the ſeveral Miniſtries of the Goſpel, but eſpecially in the Sacraments, where the Word is preached and conſigned, and the Spirit is the Teacher, and the Feeder, and makes the Table full, and the Cup to overflow with Bleſſing.

## Section III.—*That in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, there are repreſented and exhibited many great Bleſſings, upon the ſpecial account of that Sacred Miniſtery, proved in general.*

IN explicating the nature of this Divine Myſtery in general, as I have manifeſted the nature and operations, and the whole Miniſtery to be ſpiritual; and that not the natural Body and Blood of Chriſt is received by the Mouth, but the Word and the Spirit of Chriſt, by Faith

and a ſpiritual Hand; and upon this account have diſcovered their miſtake, who think the Secret lyes in the out-ſide, and ſuppoſe we tear the natural Fleſh of Chriſt with our Mouths: So I have by conſequent explicated the ſecret, which others indefinitely, and by conjecture and Zeal, do ſpeak of, and know not what to ſay, but reſolve to things great enough; it remains now that I conſider, for the ſatisfaction of thoſe that ſpeak things too contemptible of theſe Holy Myſteries, who ſay, it is nothing but a commemoration of Chriſt's Death, an Act of Obedience, a Ceremony of Memorial, but of no ſpiritual effect, and of no proper advantage to the Soul of the Receiver. Againſt this, beſides the preceding Diſcourſe, convincing their Fancy of weakneſs and derogation, the conſideration of the proper excellencies of this Myſtery, in its own ſeparate nature, will be very uſeful. For now we are to conſider, how his natural Body enters into this Oeconomy and Diſpenſation.

For the underſtanding of which we are to conſider, that Chriſt, beſides his *Spiritual* Body and Blood, did alſo give us his *Natural*, and we receive *that* by the means of *this*. For this he gave us but once, then, when upon the Croſs he was broken for our ſins; this Body could die but once, and it could be but at one place at once, and Heaven was the place appointed for it, and at once all was ſufficiently effected by it, which was deſigned in the Council of God. For by the vertue of that death, Chriſt is become the Author of

Life unto us and of Salvation; he is our Lord and our Law-giver; by it he received all Power in Heaven and in Earth, and by it he reconciled his Father to the World, and in vertue of that he intercedes for us in Heaven, and ſends his Spirit upon Earth, and feeds our Souls by his Word; he inſtructs us to Wiſdom, and admits us to Repentance, and gives us pardon, and by means of his own appointment, nouriſhes us up by Holineſs to Life Eternal.

This Body being carried from us into Heaven, cannot be touched or taſted by us on Earth, but yet Chriſt left to us Symbols and Sacraments of this natural Body; not to be, or to convey that natural Body to us, but to do more and better for us; to convey all the Bleſſings and Graces procured for us by the breaking of that Body, and the effuſion of that Blood: which Bleſſings being ſpiritual, are therefore called *his Body* ſpiritually, becauſe procured by that Body which died for us; and are therefore called our Food, becauſe by them we live a new Life in the Spirit; and Chriſt is our Bread and our Life, becauſe by him after this manner we are nouriſhed up to Life Eternal. That is plainly thus, Therefore we eat Chriſt's ſpiritual Body, becauſe he hath given us his natural Body to be broken, and his natural Blood to be ſhed, for the Remiſſion of our Sins, and for the obtaining the Grace and acceptability of Repentance. For by this Gift, and by this death he hath obtained this favour from God, but by Faith in him, and Repentance from dead Works,

by Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we may be ſaved.

To this ſence of the Myſtery are thoſe excellent words of the Apoſtle: He bare our ſins upon his own Body on the Tree, that he might deliver us from the preſent evil World, and ſanctifie and purge us from all pollution of Fleſh and Spirit, that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, that he might purchaſe to himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, and that we being dead unto Sin, might live unto Righteouſneſs. *Totum Chriſtiani nominis & pondus & fructus mors Chriſti.* All that we are, or do, or have, is produced and effected by the death of Chriſt.

Now becauſe our life depends upon this death, the miniſtry of this life muſt relate to the miniſtry of this death, and we have nothing to glory in, but in the Croſs of Chriſt: the Word preached is nothing but Jeſus Chriſt crucified: and the Sacraments are the moſt eminent way of declaring this Word: for by *Baptiſm we are buried into his death,* and by the Lord's Supper we are partakers of his death: we communicate with the Lord Jeſus as he is crucified; but now ſince all belong to this, that Word and that Myſtery that is higheſt and neareſt in this relation, is the principal and chief of all the reſt; and that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is ſo, is evident beyond all neceſſity of enquiry; it being inſtituted in the Veſpers of the Paſſion, it being the Sacrament of the Paſſion, a ſenſible repreſentation of the breaking

Chriſt's Body, of the effuſion of Chriſt's Blood; it being by Chriſt himſelf entituled to the Paſſion, and the Symbols inveſted with the names of his broken Body, and his Blood poured forth; and the whole Miniſtry being a great Declaration of this death of Chriſt, and commanded to be continued until his ſecond Coming. Certainly by all theſe it appears, that the Sacrament is the great Miniſtry of Life and Salvation: here is the publication of the great Word of Salvation, here is ſet forth moſt illuſtriouſly the Body and Blood of Chriſt, the Food of our Souls; much more clearly than in Baptiſm, much more effectually than in ſimple Enunciation, or preaching and declaration by Words; for this preaching is to Strangers and Infants in Chriſt, to produce Faith; but this Sacramental enunciation, is the declaration and confeſſion of it by men in Chriſt; a glorying in it, giving praiſe for it, a declaring it to be done, and own'd, and accepted, and prevailing.

The conſequent of theſe things is this, That if any Myſtery, Rite or Sacrament, be effective of any Spiritual Bleſſings, then this is much more; as having the prerogative and illuſtrious Principallity above every thing elſe in its own kind, or of any other kind, in exterior or interior Religion: I name them both, becauſe as in Baptiſm the Water alone does one thing, but the inward co-operation with the outward Oblation does ſave us, yet to Baptiſm the Scriptures attribute the effect: ſo it is in the Sacred Solemnity, the external act is indeed nothing but Obedience, and of it ſelf only

declares Chriſt's Death in Rite and Ceremony; yet the worthy communicating of it, does indeed make us feed upon Chriſt, and unites him to the Soul, and makes us to become one Spirit, according to the words of St. *Ambroſe*, *Ideo in ſimilitudinem quidem accipis ſacramentum, ſed veræ naturæ gratiam virtutemque conſequeris*, [Thou receiveſt the Sacrament as the ſimilitude of Chriſt's Body, but thou ſhalt receive the Grace and the vertue of the true Nature.]

I ſhall not enter into ſo uſeleſs a Diſcourſe, as to enquire whether the Sacraments confer Grace by their own excellency and power, with which they are endued from above; becauſe they who affirm they do, require ſo much duty on our parts, as they alſo do who attribute the effect to our moral diſpoſition: but neither one nor the other ſay true: for neither the External Act, nor the Internal Grace and Morality, does effect our Pardon and Salvation; but the Spirit of God, who bleſſes the Symbols, and aſſiſts the Duty, makes *them* holy, and *this* acceptable; only they that attribute the efficacy to the Miniſtration of the Sacrament, chooſe to magnifie the immediate Work of Man, rather than the immediate Work of God, and prefer the external, at leaſt in glorious Appellations, before the internal; and they that deny efficacy to the external Work, and wholly attribute the Bleſſing and Grace to the moral Co-operation, make too open a way for Deſpiſers to neglect the Divine Inſtitution, and to lay aſide or lightly eſteem the Sacraments of the Church. It is in the Sacraments, as it is in

the Word preached, in which not the Sound, or the Letters or Syllables, that is, not the material part, but the formal, the ſence and ſignification, prepare the mind of the hearer to receive the impreſſes of the Holy Spirit of God, without which all Preaching and all Sacraments are ineffectual: ſo does the internal and formal part, the ſignification and ſence of the Sacrament, diſpoſe the Spirit of the Receiver, the rather to admit and entertain the Grace of the Spirit of God there conſigned, and there exhibited, and there collated; but neither the outward, nor the inward part does effect it, neither the Sacrament, nor the moral diſpoſition; only the Spirit operates by the Sacrament, and the Communicant receives it by his moral diſpoſitions, by the hand of Faith. And what have we to do to enquire into the Philoſophy of Sacraments? Theſe things do not work by the methods of Nature: but here the effect is imputed to this cauſe, and yet can be produced without this cauſe; becauſe the cauſe is but a ſign in the hand of God, by which he tells the Soul when he is willing to work.

Thus Baptiſm was the Inſtrument and Sign in the hands of God, to confer the Holy Spirit upon Believers; but the Holy Ghoſt ſometimes comes like Lightning, and will not ſtay the period of uſual expectation; for when *Cornelius* had heard St. *Peter* preach, he received the Holy Ghoſt; and as ſometimes the Holy Ghoſt was given, becauſe they had been baptized, now he and his Company were to be baptized, becauſe they had

received the Holy Ghoſt: and it is no good Argument to ſay, The Graces of God are given to Believers out of the Sacrament, *ergo*, not by or in the Sacrament; but rather thus, if God's Grace overflows ſometimes, and goes without his own Inſtruments, much more ſhall he give it in the uſe of them: if God gives pardon without the Sacrament, then rather alſo with the Sacrament; for ſuppoſing the Sacraments in their Deſign and Inſtitution to be nothing but Signs and Ceremonies, yet they cannot hinder the Work of God: And therefore Holineſs in the reception of them, will do more than Holineſs alone: for God does nothing in vain; the Sacraments do ſomething in the hand of God; at leaſt they are God's proper and accuſtomed time of Grace; they are *his Seaſons*, and *our Opportunity;* when the Angel ſtirs the Pool, when the Spirit moves upon the Waters, then there is a Miniſtry healing.

For conſider we the nature of a Sacrament in general, and then paſs on to a particular enumeration of the Bleſſings of this, the moſt excellent. When God appointed the Bow in the Clouds to be a Sacrament, and the memorial of a Promiſe, he made it our Comfort, but his own Sign: *I will remember my Covenant between me and the Earth, and the Waters ſhall be no more a Flood to deſtroy all Fleſh.* This is but a token of the Covenant; and yet at the appearing of it, God had thoughts of Truth and Mercy to Mankind; *The Bow ſhall be in the Cloud, and I will look upon it, that I may remember the Everlaſting Covenant between me and*

*every Creature.* Thus when *Elisha* threw the Wood into the Waters of *Jordan; Sacramentum ligni,* the Sacrament of the Wood, *Tertullian* calls it; that Chip made the Iron swim, not by any natural or infused power, but that was the Sacrament or Sign, at which the Divine Power then passed on to effect an Emanation. When *Elisha* talked with the King of *Israel* about the War with *Syria,* he commanded him to smite upon the Ground, and he smote thrice, and stayed. This was *Sacramentum victoriæ,* the Sacrament of his future victory: For the man of God was wroth with him, and said, *Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times, then thou hadst smitten Syria until thou hadst consumed it; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.* In which it is remarkable, that though it was not that smiting that bent the *Syrians,* but the Ground; yet God would effect the beating of the *Syrians* by the proportion of that Sacramental smiting. The Sacraments are God's Signs, the opportunities of Grace and Action. *Be baptized and wash away thy sins,* said *Ananias* to *Saul:* and therefore it is called *the Laver of Regeneration, and of the renewing of the Holy Ghost;* that is, in that Sacrament, and at that corporal Ablution, the work of the Spirit is done; for although it is not that washing of it self, yet God does so do it at that Ablution, which is but the similitude of Christ's Death, that is, the Sacrament and symbolical representation of it, that to that very similitude a very glorious effect is imputed, *for if we have been planted together in the*

*LIKENESS of his Death, we ſhall be alſo in the LIKENESS of his Reſurrection.* For the Myſtery is this; by immerſion in Baptiſm, and emerſion, we are configured to Chriſt's Burial, and to his Reſurrection: that's the outward part; to which if we add the inward, which is there intended, and is expreſſed by the Apoſtle in the following words: *Knowing that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin:* that's our ſpiritual death, which anſwers to our configuration with the death of Chriſt in Baptiſm: *That like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life:* there's the Correſpondent of our configuration to the Reſurrection of Chriſt: that is, if we do that duty of Baptiſm, we ſhall receive that Grace: God offers us the mercy at that time, when we promiſe the duty, and do our preſent portion. This St. *Peter* calls the *ſtipulation of a good conſcience*, the *poſtulate* and *bargain* which man then makes with God, who promiſes us pardon and immortality, reſurrection from the dead, and life eternal, if we repent toward God, and have Faith in the Lord Jeſus, and if we promiſe we have and will ſo abide.

The ſame is the caſe in the other moſt glorious Sacrament: it is the ſame thing in nearer repreſentation; only what is begun in Baptiſm, proceeds on to perfection in the Holy Communion. Baptiſm is *the Antitype of the Paſſion of Chriſt*; and the Lord's Supper σημαντικὸς τῶν παθημάτων,

that alſo repreſents Chriſt's Paſſion: Baptiſm is the union of the Members of Chriſt, and the admiſſion of them under one Head into one Body, as the Apoſtle affirms, *We are all baptized into one Body;* and ſo it is in the Communion, *the Bread which we break, it is the Communion of the Body of Chriſt, for we being many, are one Body and one Bread:* in Baptiſm we partake of the death of Chriſt; and in the Lord's Supper we do the ſame, in *that* as Babes, in *this* as Men in Chriſt; ſo that what effects are affirmed of one, the ſame are in greater meaſure true of the other; they are but ſeveral rounds of *Jacob's* Ladder reaching up to Heaven, upon which the Angels aſcend and deſcend, and the Lord ſits upon the top.

And becauſe the Sacraments Evangelical be of the like kind of myſtery with the Sacraments of old; from them we can underſtand, that even ſigns of ſecret Graces, do exhibit as well as ſignifie; for beſides, that there is a natural Analogy between the ablution of the Body, and the purification of the Soul, between eating the Holy Bread, and drinking the ſacred Calice, and a participation of the Body and Blood of Chriſt; it is alſo in the method of the Divine Oeconomy, to diſpenſe the Grace which himſelf ſignifies, in a Ceremony of his own Inſtitution; thus at the Unction of Kings, Prieſts, and of Prophets, the Sacred Power was beſtowed, and as a *Canon is inveſted in his Dignity by the Tradition of a Book, and an Abbot by his Staff, a Biſhop by a Ring* (they are the Words of St. *Bernard*,) *ſo are diviſions of*

*Graces imparted to the diverſe Sacraments.* And therefore although it ought not to be denied, that when in *Scripture*, and the Writings of the Holy Doctors of the Church, the collation of Grace is attributed to the Sign, it is by a *Metonymy*, and Sacramental manner of ſpeaking, yet it is alſo a *Synecdoche* of the part for the whole; becauſe both the Sacrament and the Grace are joyned in the lawful and holy uſe of them, by Sacramental Union, or rather by a confederation of the parts of the Holy Covenant. *Our hearts are purified by Faith*, and ſo our *Conſciences* are alſo made clean in the Ciſtern of Water. *By Faith we are ſaved;* and yet he *hath ſaved us by the Laver of Regeneration*, and they are both joyned together by St. *Paul*, *Chriſt gave himſelf for his Church, that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe it with the waſhing of Water by the Word*, that is, plainly by the Sacrament, according to the famous Commentary of St. *Auſtin*, *accedat Verbum ad Elementum & tum fit Sacramentum*, when the Word and the Element are joyned, then it is a perfect Sacrament, and then it does effect all its Purpoſes and Intentions. Thus we find that the Grace of God is given by the impoſition of hands; and yet as St. *Auſtin* rightly affirms, God alone can give his Holy Spirit, and the Apoſtles did not give the Holy Ghoſt to them upon whom they laid their hands; but prayed that God would give it, and he did ſo at the impoſition of their hands. Thus God ſanctified *Aaron;* and yet he ſaid to *Moſes*, thou ſhalt ſanctifie *Aaron*, that is, not that *Moſes* did it, in-

ſtead of God, but *Moſes* did it by his Miniſtry, and by viſible Sacraments and Rites of God's appointment; and though we *are born of an Immortal Seed, by the Word of the Living God*, yet St. *Paul* ſaid to the *Corinthians, I have begotten you through the Goſpel;* and thus it is in the greateſt, as well as in the leaſt, he that drinks Chriſt's Blood, and eats his Body, *hath Life abiding in him:* it is true of the Sacrament, and true of the Spiritual Manducation, and may be indifferently affirmed of either, when the other is not excluded; for as the Sacrament operates only by vertue of the Spirit of God; ſo the Spirit ordinarily works by the inſtrumentality of the Sacraments. And we may as well ſay, that Faith is not by Hearing, as that Grace is not by the Sacraments; for as without the Spirit, the Word is but a dead Letter, ſo with the Spirit, the Sacrament is the means of Life and Grace: and the Meditation of *St. Chryſoſtom* is very pious and reaſonable, [*If we were wholly incorporeal, God would have given us Graces uncloathed with Signs and Sacraments, but becauſe our Spirits are in earthen Veſſels, God conveys his Graces to us by ſenſible Miniſtrations.*] The Word of God operates as ſecretly as the Sacraments, and the Sacraments as powerfully as the Word; nay, the Word is always joyned in the worthy Adminiſtration of the Sacrament, which therefore operates both as Word and Sign by the ear, and by the eyes, and by both in the hand of God; and in the Conduct of the Spirit, effect all that God intends, and that a faithful Receiver can require and pray for.

For Juſtification and Sanctification are continued Acts: they are like the Iſſues of a Fountain into its receptacles; God is always giving, and we are always receiving, and the ſignal effects of God's Holy Spirit, ſometimes gives great indications, but moſt commonly come without obſervation; and therefore in theſe things we muſt not diſcourſe, as in the conduct of other cauſes and operations natural: for although in natural effects, we can argue from the Cauſe to the event, yet in ſpiritual things we are to reckon only from the Sign to the event. And the ſigns of Grace we are to place inſtead of natural cauſes; becauſe a Sacrament in the hand of God, is a Proclamation of his Graces, he then gives us notice that the Springs of Heaven are opened; and then is the time to draw living Waters from the Fountains of Salvation: When *Jonathan ſhot his* Arrows beyond the Boy, he then by a Sacrament ſent Salvation unto *David;* he bad him be gone, and fly from his Father's Wrath: and although *Jonathan* did do his buſineſs for him by a continual care and obſervation, yet that Symbol brought it unto *David;* for ſo we are conducted to the Joys of God, by the methods and poſſibilities of Men.

In concluſion, the ſum is this, The Sacraments and Symbols, if they be conſidered in their own nature, are juſt ſuch as they ſeem, Water, and Bread, and Wine; they retain the names proper to their own natures; but becauſe they are made to be ſigns of a ſecret Myſtery; and Water is the Symbol of purification of the Soul from ſin, and

Bread and Wine, of Christ's Body and Blood: therefore the Symbols and Sacraments receive the names of what themselves do sign: they are the Body, and they are the Blood of Christ: they are *Metonymically* such. But because yet farther, they are Instruments of Grace in the hand of God, and by these his Holy Spirit, changes our hearts, and translates us into a Divine Nature: therefore the whole Work is attributed to them by a *Synecdoche:* that is, they do in their manner the Work for which God ordained them, and they are placed there for our sakes; and speak God's Language in our Accent, and they appear in the outside: we receive the benefit of their Ministry, and God receives the Glory.

## Section IV.—*The Blessings and Graces of the Holy Sacrament enumerated and proved particularly.*

IN the reception of the Blessed Sacrament, there are many Blessings which proceed from our own Actions, the Conjugations of moral Duties, the Offices of preparation and reception, the Reverence and the Devotion; of which I shall give an account in the following Chapters: here I am to enumerate those Graces, which are intended to descend upon us from the Spirit of God, in the use of the Sacrament it self precisely.

But firſt I conſider, That it muſt be infinitely certain, that great ſpiritual Bleſſings are conſequent to the worthy receiving of this Divine Sacrament: becauſe it is not at all received but by a ſpiritual hand: for it is either to be underſtood in a carnal ſenſe, that Chriſt's Body is there eaten, or in a ſpiritual ſenſe: If in a carnal, it profits nothing; if in a ſpiritual he be eaten, let the Meaning of that be conſidered, and it will convince us, that innumerable Bleſſings are in the very Reception and Communion. Now what the meaning of this ſpiritual eating is, I have already declared in this Chapter, and ſhall yet more fully explicate in the ſequel. In the Sacrament we do not receive Chriſt carnally; but we receive him ſpiritually: and that of itſelf is a conjugation of Bleſſings and ſpiritual Graces. The very underſtanding what we do, tells us alſo what we receive. But I deſcend to particulars.

1. And firſt I reckon that the Sacrament is intended to increaſe our Faith: for although it is with us in the Holy Sacrament, as it was with *Abraham* in the Sacrament of Circumciſion: he had the Grace of Faith before he was circumciſed: and received the Sacrament after he had the purpoſe and the Grace: and we are to believe, before we receive theſe Symbols of Chriſt's Death: yet as by loving we love more, and by the acts of patience we increaſe in the Spirit of mortification: ſo by believing we believe more: and by publication of our confeſſion we are made confident; and by ſeeing the ſigns of what we believe, our

very ſenſes are incorporated into the Article: *and he that hath ſhall have more;* and when we concorporate the Sign with the ſignification, we conjoyn the Word and the Spirit, and Faith paſſes on from believing to an imaginary ſeeing, and from thence to a greater earneſtneſs of believing, and we ſhall believe more abundantly: this increaſe of Faith not being only a natural and proper production of the exerciſe of its own Acts, but a bleſſing and an effect of the Grace of God in that Sacrament: It being certain, that ſince the Sacrament being of Divine Inſtitution, it could not be to no purpoſe *(for in ſpiritualibus Sacramentis ubi præcepit virtus, ſervit effectus: where the Commandment comes from him that hath all power, the Action cannot be deſtitute of an excellent Event:)* and therefore that the repreſenting of the death of Chriſt, being an act of Faith, and commanded by God, muſt needs in the hands of God be more effectual than it is in its own nature; that Faith ſhall then increaſe, not only by the way of nature, but by God's bleſſing his own Inſtruments, can never be denied, but by them that neither have Faith nor Experience. For this is the proper ſenſe and the very exaltation of Faith: the Latin Church for a long time into the very words of Conſecration of the Chalice, hath put words relating to this purpoſe, [*For, this is the Cup of my Blood of the New and Eternal Teſtament, the Myſtery of Faith, which for you and for many ſhall be ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins.*] And if by Faith we eat the Fleſh of Chriſt; as it is confeſſed by all the Schools of

Chriſtians; then it is certain, that when ſo manifeſtly and ſolemnly, according to the Divine Appointment, we publiſh this great Confeſſion of the death of Chriſt, we do in all ſenſes of ſpiritual bleſſing, eat the Fleſh, and drink the Blood of Chriſt; and let that be expounded how we liſt, we are not in this World capable, and we do not need a greater bleſſing, and God may ſay in the words of *Iſaac* to his Son *Eſau*, with Corn and Wine have I ſuſtained [thee] and what is there left that I can do unto thee my Son? To eat the Fleſh, and to drink the Blood of Chriſt Sacramentally, is an act of Faith, and every act of Faith, joyned with the Sacrament, does grow by the nature of Grace, and the meaſures of a Bleſſing; and therefore is eating of Chriſt ſpiritually, and this reflection of acts, like circles of a glorious and eternal fire, paſſes on in the univocal production of its own parts, till it paſs from Grace to Glory.

2. Of the ſame conſideration it is, that all the Graces which we do exerciſe by the nature of the Sacrament requiring them, or by the neceſſity of the commandment of preparation, do here receive increaſe upon the account of the ſame reaſon; but I inſtance only in that of Charity, of which this is ſignally, and by an eſpecial remark the Sacrament; and therefore theſe Holy Conventions are called by *St. Jude*, *Feaſts of Charity*, which were Chriſtian Feſtivals, in which alſo they had the Sacrament adjoyned; but whether that doth effect this perſwaſion or no, yet the thing itſelf is dogmatically affirmed in *St. Paul's* explication of that

Myſtery, *We are one Body, becauſe we partake of one Bread;* that is, plainly, Chriſt is our Head, and we the Members of his Body, and are united in this miſtical Union by the Holy Sacrament; not only becauſe it ſymbolically does teach our Duty, and promotes the Grace of Charity by a real Signature, and a ſenſible Sermon; nor yet only becauſe it calls upon Chriſtians, by the Publick Sermons of the Goſpel, and the Duties of preparation, and the uſual expectations of Conſcience and Religion; but even by the bleſſing of God, and the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament, which (as appears plainly by the words of the Apoſtle) is deſigned to this very end, to be a Reconciler and an Atonement in the hand of God; a hand of Charity, and the Inſtrument of Chriſtian Communion; that we may be one Body, becauſe we partake of one Bread; that is, we may be myſtically united by the Sacramental Participation; and therefore it was not without Myſtery, that the Congregation of all Chriſt's Servants, *his Church*, and *this Sacramental Bread*, are both in Scripture called by the ſame name. This Bread is the Body of Chriſt, and the Church is Chriſt's Body too; for by the Communion of this Bread, all faithful People are confederated into one Body, the Body of our Lord. Now it is to be obſerved, that although the expreſſion is tropical and figurative, that *we are made one Body*, becauſe it is meant in a ſpiritual ſenſe, yet that ſpiritual ſenſe means the moſt real Event in the World; we are really joyned to one common Divine Principle, Jeſus

Chriſt our Lord, and from him we do communicate in all the bleſſings of his Grace, and the fruits of his Paſſion; and we ſhall, if we abide in this Union, be all one Body of a ſpiritual Church in Heaven, there to reign with Chriſt for ever. Now unleſs we think nothing good, but what goes in at our Eyes or Mouth; if we think there is any thing good, beyond what our ſenſes perceive, we muſt confeſs this to be a real and eminent Benefit; and yet whatever it be, it is therefore effected upon us by this Sacrament, *becauſe we eat of one Bread.* The very repeating the words of St. *Paul*, is a ſatisfaction in this inquiry; they are plain and eaſie, and whatever interpretation can be put upon them, it can only vary the manner of effecting the Bleſſing, and the way of the Sacramental Efficacy; but it cannot evacuate the Bleſſing, or confute the thing: only it is to be obſerved in this, as in all other inſtances of the like nature, that the Grace of God in the Sacrament, uſually is a Bleſſing upon our endeavours; for ſpiritual Graces and the Bleſſings of Sanctification do not grow like Graſs, but like Corn; not whether we do any Huſbandry or no, but if we cultivate the Ground, then by God's Bleſſing the Fruits will ſpring and make the Farmer rich; if we be diſpoſed to receive the Sacrament worthily, we ſhall receive this Fruit alſo. Which Fruit is thus expreſſed, ſaying, [This Sacrament is therefore given unto us, that the Body of the Church of Chriſt in the Earth may be joyned, or united with our Head which is in the Heavens.]

3. The bleſſed Sacrament is of great efficacy for

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the remiſſion of ſins, not that it hath any formal efficacy, or any inherent virtue to procure pardon, but that it is the Miniſtry of the Death of Chriſt, and the application of his Blood, which Blood was ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins, and is the great means of impetration, and as the Schools uſe to ſpeak, is the meritorious Cauſe of it. For there are but two ways of applying the Death of Chriſt, an internal Grace, and an external Miniſtry. Faith is the inward Applicatory; and if there be any outward at all, it muſt be the Sacraments; and both of them are of remarkable virtue in this particular; for by Baptiſm we are baptized into the Death of Chriſt, and the Lord's Supper is an appointed enunciation and declaration of Chriſt's Death, and it is a Sacramental Participation of it. Now to partake of it Sacramentally, is by a Sacrament to receive it, that is, ſo to apply it to us, as that can be applied; it brings it to our Spirit, it propounds it to our Faith, it repreſents it as the matter of Euchariſt, it gives it as Meat and Drink to our Souls, and rejoyces in it, in that very Formality in which it does receive it, *viz.* as broken for, as ſhed for the remiſſion of our ſins. Now then what can any man ſuppoſe a Sacrament to be, and what can be meant by ſacramental Participation? for unleſs the Sacraments do communicate what they relate to, they are no Communion or Communication at all; for it is true that our mouth eats the material Signs; but at the ſame time, Faith eats too, and therefore muſt eat, that is, muſt partake of the thing ſignified: Faith is not maintained by Ceremonies; the

Body receives the Body of the Myſtery; we eat and drink the Symbols with our mouths; but Faith is not corporeal, but feeds upon the Myſtery it ſelf; it entertains the Grace, and enters into that Secret, which the Spirit of God conveys under that ſignature. Now ſince the Myſtery is perfectly and openly expreſſed to be the remiſſion of ſins; if the Soul does the work of the Soul, as the Body the work of the Body, the Soul receives remiſſion of ſins, as the Body does the Symbols of it and the Sacrament.

But we muſt be infinitely careful to remember, that even the Death of Chriſt brings no pardon to the impenitent perſevering ſinner; but to him that repents truly, and ſo does the Sacrament of Chriſt's Death, this can do no more than that; and therefore let no man come with his guilt about him, and in the heat, and in the affections of his ſin, and hope to find his pardon by this Miniſtry. He that thinks ſo will but deceive, will but ruine himſelf. They are excellent, but very ſevere Words which God ſpake to the *Jews*, and which are a prophetical reproof of all unworthy Communicants, in theſe Divine Myſteries, *What hath my beloved to do in my Houſe, ſeeing ſhe hath wrought lewdneſs with many? The holy fleſh hath paſſed from thee when thou doſt evil,* that is, this Holy Sacrifice, the Fleſh and Blood of thy Lord ſhall ſlip from thee without doing thee any good, if thou haſt not ceaſed from doing evil. But the Vulgar Latin reads theſe Words much more emphatically to our purpoſe, *Shall the holy fleſh take from thee thy wick-*

*edneſs, in which thou rejoyceſt?* Deceive not thyſelf, thou haſt no part nor portion in this matter. For the holy Sacrament operates indeed and conſigns our Pardon, but not alone, but in conjunction with all that Chriſt requires as conditions of pardon; but when the Conditions are preſent, the Sacrament miniſters pardon, as pardon is miniſtered in this world, that is, by parts, and in order to ſeveral purpoſes, and with power of Revocation, by ſuſpending the Divine Wrath, by procuring more Graces, by obtaining time of Repentance, and powers and poſſibilities of working out our Salvation, and by ſetting forward the Method and Oeconomy of our Salvation. For in the uſual methods of God, Pardon of ſins is proportionable to our Repentance; which becauſe it is all that ſtate of Piety we have in this whole life, after our firſt ſin; pardon of ſins is all that effect of Grace, which is conſequent to that Repentance; and the worthy receiving of the Holy Communion, is but one Conjugation of holy actions and parts of Repentance; but indeed it is the beſt and the nobleſt, and ſuch in which man does beſt co-operate towards pardon, and the Grace of God does the moſt illuſtrioufly conſign it. But of theſe Particulars I ſhall give full account, when I ſhall diſcourſe of the Preparations of Repentance.

4. It is the greateſt Solemnity of Prayer, the moſt powerful Liturgy and means of impetration, in this World. For when Chriſt was conſecrated on the Croſs, and became our High Prieſt, having reconciled us to God by the Death of the Croſs,

he became infinitely gracious in the eyes of God, and was admitted to the celeſtial and eternal Prieſthood in Heaven, where in the virtue of the Croſs he intercedes for us, and repreſents an eternal Sacrifice in the Heavens on our behalf. That he is a Prieſt in Heaven, appears in the large diſcourſes, and direct affirmatives of St. *Paul;* that there is no other ſacrifice to be offered, but that on the Croſs it is evident, becauſe he hath but once appeared in the end of the World to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf; and therefore ſince it is neceſſary that he hath ſomething to offer ſo long as he is a Prieſt, and there is no other Sacrifice but that of himſelf offered upon the Croſs; it follows that Chriſt in Heaven perpetually offers and repreſents that Sacrifice to his Heavenly Father, and in virtue of that obtains all good things for his Church.

Now what Chriſt does in Heaven, he hath commanded us to do on Earth, that is, to repreſent his death, to commemorate this Sacrifice by humble Prayer, and thankful Record, and by faithful manifeſtation and joyful Euchariſt, to lay it before the eyes of our Heavenly Father, ſo miniſtering in his Prieſthood, and doing according to his commandment and his example; the Church being the Image of Heaven, the Prieſt, the Miniſter of Chriſt; the holy Table being a Copy of the cœleſtial Altar; and the eternal Sacrifice of the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the World, being always the ſame; it bleeds no more after the finiſhing of it on the Croſs; but it is wonderfully

repreſented in Heaven; and graciouſly repreſented here; by Chriſt's actions there, by his commandment here; and the event of it is plainly this, that as Chriſt in virtue of his Sacrifice on the Croſs intercedes for us with his Father; ſo does the Miniſter of Chriſt's Prieſthood here; that the virtue of the eternal Sacrifice may be ſalutary and effectual to all the needs of the Church, both for things temporal, and eternal: and therefore it was not without great myſtery and clear ſignification, that our bleſſed Lord was pleaſed to command the repreſentation of his Death, and Sacrifice on the Croſs, ſhould be made by breaking Bread, and effuſion of Wine; to ſignifie to us the nature and ſacredneſs of the Liturgy we are about, and that we miniſter in the Prieſthood of Chriſt, who is a Prieſt for ever after the order of *Melchiſedeck;* that is, we are Miniſters in that unchangeable Prieſthood, imitating *in the external Miniſtry*, the Prototype *Melchiſedeck:* Of whom it was ſaid, *he brought forth Bread and Wine, and was the Prieſt of the moſt high God;* and *in the internal* imitating the Antitype, or the Subſtance, Chriſt himſelf; who offered up his Body and Blood for atonement for us, and by the Sacraments of Bread and Wine, and the Prayers of Oblation and Interceſſion, commands us to officiate in his Prieſthood, in the external miniſtring like *Melchiſedeck;* in the internal after the manner of Chriſt himſelf.

This is a great and a myſterious Truth, which as it is plainly manifeſted in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſo it is underſtood by the ancient and holy

Doctors of the Church. So St. *Ambroſe*. [Now Chriſt is offered, but he is offered as a Man, as if he received his Paſſion; but he offers himſelf as a Prieſt, that he may pardon our ſins; here in Image or Repreſentation, there in Truth, as an Advocate interceding with his Father for us.] So St. *Chryſoſtom; In Chriſt once the Sacrifice was offered, which is powerful to our Eternal Salvation; but what then do we? do not we offer every day? what we daily offer is as the memorial of his Death, and the ſacrifice is one, not many; becauſe Chriſt was once offered, but this Sacrifice is the example or repreſentation of that.* And another: *Chriſt is not impiouſly ſlain by us, but piouſly ſacrificed, and by this means we declare the Lord's Death till he come; for here through him we humbly do in Earth, which he as a Son, who is heard according to his reverence, does powerfully for us in Heaven: where, as an Advocate, he intercedes with his Father, whoſe office or work it is, for us to exhibit and interpoſe his Fleſh which he took of us, and for us, and as it were to preſs it upon his Father.* To the ſame ſenſe is the meditation of St. *Auſtin; By this he is the Prieſt and the Oblation, the Sacrament of which he would have the daily Sacrifice of the Church to be; which becauſe it is the Body of that Head, ſhe learns from him to offer her ſelf to God by him, who offered himſelf to God for her.* And therefore this whole Office is called by St. *Baſil* εὐχὴ προσκομιδῆς, the Prayer of Oblation, the great Chriſtian Sacrifice and Oblation in which we preſent our Prayers, and the needs of our ſelves and of our Brethren unto God, in virtue of the great Sacrifice,

Chriſt upon the Croſs, whoſe memorial we then celebrate in a Divine manner, by Divine Appointment.

The effect of this I repreſent in the Words of *Lyra:* [That which doth purge and cleanſe our ſins muſt be cœleſtial and ſpiritual, and that which is ſuch hath a perpetual Efficacy, and needs not to be done again; but that which is dayly offered in the Church, is a dayly Commemoration of that one Sacrifice, which was offered on the Croſs, according to the command of Chriſt, Do this in commemoration of me.]

Now this holy Miniſtry and Sacrament of this death, being according to Chriſt's commandment, and in our manner a Repreſentation of that eternal Sacrifice, an imitation of Chriſt's interceſſion in Heaven, in virtue of that Sacrifice, muſt be after the pattern in the Mount, it muſt be as that is, *purâ prece*, as *Tertullian's* phraſe is, by pure Prayer; it is an interceſſion for the whole Church, preſent and abſent, in the virtue of that Sacrifice. I need add no more but leave it to the meditation, to the joy and admiration of all Chriſtian People to think, and to enumerate the bleſſings of this Sacrament, which is ſo excellent a repreſentation of Chriſt's Death, by Chriſt's commandment; and ſo glorious an imitation of that interceſſion which Chriſt makes in Heaven for us all; it is all but the repreſentation of his death, in the way of prayer and interpellation; Chriſt as Head, and we as Members; he as High Prieſt, and we as Servants his Miniſters; and therefore I ſhall ſtop here, and leave the

reſt for wonder and Euchariſt: we may pray here with all the ſolemnity and advantages imaginable; we may with hope and comfort uſe the words of *David, I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord:* we are here very likely to prevail for all bleſſings, for this is by way of eminency, glory, and ſingularity, *Calix benedictionis*, the Cup of Bleſſing which we bleſs, and by which God will bleſs us, and for which he is to be bleſſed for evermore.

5. By the means of this Sacrament our Bodies are made capable of the reſurrection to Life and eternal Glory. For when we are *externally* and ſymbolically in the Sacrament, and by Faith and the Spirit of God *internally* united to Chriſt, and made partakers of his Body and Blood, we are joyned and made one with him, who did riſe again; and when the Head is riſen, the Members ſhall not ſee corruption for ever, but riſe again after the pattern of our Lord. If by the Sacrament we are really united and made one with Chriſt, then it ſhall be to us in our proportion as it was to him: we ſhall riſe again, and we ſhall enter into Glory. But it is certain we are united to Chriſt by it; we eat his Body and drink his Blood Sacramentally by our mouths, and therefore really and ſpiritually by our Spirits, and by ſpiritual actions co-operating. For what good will it do us to partake of his Body, if we do not alſo partake of his Spirit? but certain it is, if we do one, we do both; *cum naturalis per ſacramentum proprietas perfectæ ſacramentum ſit unitatis*, as St. *Hilary's* expreſſion is; *the natural pro-*

*priety*, viz. *the outward Elements by the Sacrament*, that is, by the inſtitution and bleſſing of God, become the Sacrament of a perfect Unity, which beſide all the Premiſſes, is diſtinctly affirmed in the words of the Apoſtle; *We which are ſanctified, and he which ſanctifies are all of one;* and again, *The Bread which we break, is it not the communication of the Body of Chriſt? and the Cup which we drink, is it not the communication of the Blood of Chriſt?* plainly ſaying, that by this Holy Miniſtry we are joyned and partake of Chriſt's Body and Blood, and then we become ſpiritually one Body, and therefore ſhall receive in our Bodies all the effects of that ſpiritual Union; the chief of which in relation to our Bodies, is Reſurrection from the Grave. And this is expreſly taught by the Ancient Church. So St. *Irenæus* teaches us; *As the Bread which grows from the Earth, receiving the calling of God, (that is, bleſſed by Prayer, and the Word of God) is not now common Bread, but the Euchariſt, conſiſting of two things, an earthly and an heavenly; ſo alſo our Bodies, receiving the Euchariſt, are not now corruptible, but have the hope of Reſurrection:* And again, *when the mingled Chalice and the made Bread receives the Word of God*, viz. *is conſecrated and bleſſed; it is made the Euchariſt of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, out of thoſe things by which our Body is nouriſhed, and our Subſtance does conſiſt: and how ſhall any one deny that the Fleſh is capable of the Gift of God, which is Eternal Life, which is nouriſhed by the Body and Blood of Chriſt?* And St. *Ignatius* calls the bleſſed Euchariſt, ἀθανασίας φάρμακον; the medicine of Im-

mortality, for the Drink is his Blood, who is ἀγάπη ἄφθαρτος καὶ ἄενναος ζωὴ, incorruptible Love and eternal Life, σύμβολα τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀναςάσεως, ſo the Fathers of the *Nicene* Council; the Symbols of our Reſurrection, the Meat nouriſhing to immortality and eternal Life, ſo St. *Cyril* of *Alexandria; for this is to drink the Blood of Jeſus, to be partakers of the Lord's incorruptibility*, ſaid St. *Clement*. For Bread is Food, and Blood is Life, but we drink the Blood of Chriſt, himſelf commanding us that together with him, we may by him be partakers of eternal Life; ſo St. *Cyprian*, *Aut quicunque ſit author Sermon. de cœna Domini.*

6. Becauſe this is a Miniſtry of Grace by bodily Ceremonies, and conveys ſpiritual bleſſings by temporal Miniſtrations; there is ſomething alſo of temporal regard directly provided for our Bodies by the Holy Sacrament. It ſometimes is a means in the hand of God for the reſtoring and preſerving reſpectively of our bodily health, and ſecular advantages: I will not inſiſt upon that of St. *Gorgonia*, who being oppreſſed with a violent head-ach, threw her ſelf down before the Holy Table where the Sacrament was placed, and prayed with paſſion and pertinacy till ſhe obtained relief and eaſe in that very place: Nor that of St. *Ambroſe;* who having trod upon a Gentleman's foot afflicted with the Gout, in the time of miniſtration, gave him the Holy Symbols, and told him it was good for his ſickneſs alſo, and that he preſently found his cure. I myſelf knew a Perſon of great ſanctity, who was afflicted to death's door, with a vomiting, and pre-

paring herſelf to death by her *viaticum* the Holy Sacrament, to which ſhe always bore a great reverence, ſhe was infinitely deſirous, and yet equally fearful to receive it, leſt ſhe ſhould reject that by her infirmity, which in her Spirit ſhe paſſionately longed for; but her deſire was the greater paſſion, and prevailed; ſhe received it, and ſwallowed it, and after great and earneſt reluctancy being forced to caſt it up, in Zeal, and with a new paſſion took it in again, and then retained it, and from that inſtant ſpeedily recovered, againſt the hope of her Phyſician, and the expectation of all her Friends. God does Miracles every day; and he who with Spittle and Clay cured the blind man's eyes, may well be ſuppoſed to glorifie himſelf by the extraordinary Contingencies and Sacramental Contacts of his own Body. But that which is moſt famous and remarked, is, that the *Auſtrian Family* do attribute the Riſe of their Houſe to the preſent Grandeur, to *William Earl of Huburg*, and do acknowledge it to be a Reward of his Piety in the venerable treatment and uſage of theſe Divine Myſteries. It were eaſier to heap together many rare Contingencies, and miraculous Effects of the Holy Sacrament, than to find Faith to believe them now adays; and therefore for this whole affair I rely upon the words of St. *Paul*, affirming, that God ſent ſickneſſes and ſundry kinds of deaths, to puniſh the Corinthian irreverent Treatment of the bleſſed Sacrament; and therefore it is not to be deemed, but that life and health will be the Conſequent of our holy uſages of it: for if by our fault it is a

Savour of death; it is certain, by the bleſſing and intention of God, a Savour of Life. But of theſe things in particular we have no promiſe, and therefore ſuch events as theſe, cannot upon this account of Faith and certain expectations be deſigned by us in our Communions. If God pleaſe to ſend any of them, as ſometimes he hath done, it is to promote his own Glory, and our value of the bleſſed Sacrament, the great Miniſtry of Salvation.

7. The ſum of all I repreſent in theſe few words of St. *Hilary*. Theſe holy Myſteries being taken, cauſe that Chriſt ſhall be in us, and we in Chriſt; and if this be more than words, we need no farther enquiry into the Particulars of bleſſing, conſequent to a worthy Communion; for, *if God hath given his Son unto us, how ſhall not he with him give us all things elſe?* nay all things that we need are effected by this, ſaid St. *Clement* of *Alexandria*, one of the moſt Ancient Fathers of the Church of Chriſt: *Euchariſtiæ qui per fidem ſunt participes, ſanctificantur & corpore & anima:* They who by Faith are partakers of the Euchariſt, are ſanctified both in Body and in Soul.

*Fonte renaſcentes membris & ſanguine Chriſti*
*Veſcimur, atque ideo templum Deitatis habemur.*
Sedul.

*How great therefore and how illuſtrious benefits* (*it is the Meditation of St.* Euſebius Emiſſenus) *does the power of Divine bleſſing produce? you ought not to eſteem it ſtrange and impoſſible; for how earthly and mortal things are converted into the Subſtance of*

*Chriſt, aſk thy ſelf, who art regenerated in Chriſt: Not long ſince, thou waſt a ſtranger from Life, a Pilgrim and a Wanderer from Mercy, and being inwardly dead, thou wert baniſhed from the way of Life. On a ſudden, being initiated into the Laws of Chriſt, and renewed by the Myſteries of Salvation, thou didſt paſs ſuddenly into the Body of the Church, not by Seeing but by Believing; and from a Son of Perdition, thou haſt obtained to be adopted a Son of God, by a ſecret purity; remaining in a viſible meaſure, thou art inviſibly made greater than thy ſelf, without any increaſe of quantity; thou art the ſame thou wert, and yet very much another Perſon in progreſſion of Faith; to the outward nothing is added, but the inward is wholly changed; and ſo a man is made the Son of Chriſt, and Chriſt is formed in the mind of a man. As therefore ſuddenly without any bodily perception, the former vileneſs being laid down, on the ſudden thou haſt put on a new dignity, and this that God hath done, that he hath cured thy wounds, waſhed off thy ſtains, wiped away thy ſpots, is truſted to thy diſcerning, not thy eyes; ſo when thou aſcendeſt the reverend Altar to be ſatisfied with ſpiritual Food, by Faith regard, honour, admire the Holy Body of God, touch it with thy mind, take it with the hand of thy heart, even with the draught of the whole inward man.*

## SECTION V.—*Practical Concluſions from the preceding Diſcourſes.*

THE firſt I repreſent in the words of St. *Auguſtin*, who reduces this whole Doctrine to practice in theſe excellent words [Let this whole Affair thus far prevail with us, that we may eat the Fleſh, [and drink] the Blood of Chriſt, not only in the Sacrament, which many evil Perſons do, but let us eat and drink unto the participation of the Spirit; that as Members we may abide in the Lord's Body, that we may be quickned by his Spirit; and let us not be ſcandalized, becauſe many do temporally eat and drink with us, who yet in the end ſhall find eternal torments] that is, Let us remember that the exterior Miniſtry is the leaſt part of it; and externally and alone it hath in it nothing excellent, as being deſtitute of the ſanctity that God requires, and the Grace that he does promiſe, and it is common to wicked men and good: but when the Signs and the thing ſignified, when the Prayers of the Church, and the Spirit of God, the Word and the meaning, the Sacrament and the Grace do concur; then it is πολλῆς ἐμοὶ δυνάμιον, it is a venerable Cup, and full of power, and more honourable than all our poſſeſſions; it is a holy thing, ſaith *Origen*, and appointed for our Sanctification. For Chriſt in the Sacrament, is Chriſt under a Veil: as without

the hand of Faith, we cannot take Chriſt, ſo we muſt be ſure to look here with an eye of Faith, and whatſoever glorious thing is ſaid of the Holy Sacrament, it muſt be underſtood of the whole Sacrament, Body and Spirit, that is, the Sacramental and the Spiritual Communion.

2. Let no man be leſs confident in his Holy Faith and Perſwaſion, concerning the great bleſſings and glorious effects which God deſigns to every faithful and obedient Soul, in the communication of theſe Divine Myſteries, by reaſon of any difference of Judgment, which is in the ſeveral Schools of Chriſtians, concerning the Effects and conſequent Bleſſings of this Sacrament. For all men ſpeak honourable things of it, except wicked perſons, and the ſcorners of Religion: and though of ſeveral perſons, like the beholders of a Dove walking in the Sun, as they ſtand in ſeveral aſpects and diſtances, ſome ſee red, and others purple, and yet ſome perceive nothing but green, but all allow and love the Beauties: ſo do the ſeveral forms of Chriſtians, according as they are inſtructed by their firſt Teachers, or their own Experience, conducted by their fancy and proper principles, look upon theſe glorious Myſteries; ſome as virtually containing the reward of Obedience, ſome as ſolemnities of thankſgiving and records of bleſſings, ſome as the objective increaſes of Faith, others as the Sacramental participations of Chriſt, others as the acts and inſtruments of natural Union; yet all affirm ſome great things or other of it, and by their differences confeſs the Immenſity and the Glory.

For thus Manna repreſented to every man the taſte that himſelf did like; but it had in its own Potentiality all thoſe taſtes and diſpoſitions eminently, and altogether; thoſe Feaſters could ſpeak of great and many excellencies, and all confeſſed it to be enough, and to be the Food of Angels: ſo it is here, it is that to every man's Faith, which his Faith wiſely apprehends; and though there are ſome who are of little Faith, and ſuch receive but a leſs proportion of nouriſhment, yet by the very uſe of this Sacrament, the appetite will increaſe, and the apprehenſions grow greater, and the Faith will be more confident and inſtructed; and then we ſhall ſee more, and feel more. For this holy nutriment is not only Food, but Phyſick too; and although to him who believes great things of his Phyſician, and of his Medicine, it is apt to do the more advantage; yet it will do its main work, even when we underſtand it not, and nothing can hinder it, but direct Infidelity, or ſome of its foul and deformed Miniſters.

3. They who receive the bleſſed Sacrament, muſt not ſuppoſe that the Bleſſings of it, are effected as Health is by Phyſick, or warmth by the contact and neighbourhood of Fire; but as Muſick one way affects the Soul, and witty diſcourſes another, and joyful tidings a way differing from both the former, ſo the operations of the Sacrament are produced by an Energy of a nature entirely differing from all things elſe; but however it is done, the thing that is done, is this, no Grace is there improved, but what we bring along with us; no

Increaſes but what we exerciſe; we muſt bring Faith along with us, and God will increaſe our Faith; we muſt come with Charity, and we ſhall go away with more; we muſt come with truly penitential hearts, and to him that hath ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundantly: he ſhall be a better Penitent, when he hath eaten the Sacrifice that was ſlain for our ſins, and died in the Body, that we might live in the Spirit and die no more. For he is the Bread from Heaven, he is the Grain of Wheat, which falling into the Earth, unleſs it dies it remains alone, but if it dies, it brings forth Fruit, and brings it forth abundantly.

4. Although the Words, the Names and Sayings concerning the bleſſed Sacrament are myſterious and inexplicable, yet they do, nay therefore we are ſure they ſignifie ſome great thing; they are in the very expreſſion beyond our underſtandings, and therefore much more are the things themſelves too high for us: but therefore we are taught three things. 1. To walk humbly with our God; that is, in all intercourſes with him to acknowledg the infinite diſtance between his Immenſity and our Nothing; his Wiſdom and our Ignorance; his Secrets and our Apprehenſions; he does more for us than we can underſtand. It was an excellent ſaying of *Ariſtotle*, which *Seneca* reports of him. *Nunquam nos verecundiores eſſe debere, quàm dum de Diis agitur*, we ought never to be more baſhful and recollect, than when we are to ſpeak any thing of God. *Timidè de poteſtate Deorum, & pauca dicenda ſunt*, ſaid *Cicero*, we muſt ſpeak of his Power

and Glory, timorouſly and ſparingly, with joyfulneſs and ſingleneſs, or ſimplicity of heart: ſo the firſt Chriſtians did eat their Bread, their Euchariſt; ſo we underſtand the words of St. *Luke*. 2. To walk charitably with our diſagreeing Brother, that this may be indeed a Sacrament of Charity, and not to wonder if he be miſtaken in his diſcourſes of that, which neither he nor you can underſtand. 3. Though it be hard to be underſtood, yet we muſt be careful, that with ſimplicity we admire the Secret, and accept the Myſtery; but at no hand, by Pride or Ignorance, by Intereſt or Vanity, to wreſt this Myſtery to ignoble Senſes, or to evil Events, or to dangerous Propoſitions, or to our own damnation.

5. What-ever Propoſitions any man ſhall entertain in his manner of diſcourſing of theſe Myſteries, let him be ſure to take into his notice and memory, thoſe great Appellatives with which the pureſt Ages of the Church, the moſt ancient Liturgies, and the moſt eminent Saints of God uſe to adorn and inveſt this great Myſteriouſneſs. In the Greek Liturgy attributed to St. *James;* the Sacramental Symbols are called, *ſanctified*, *honourable*, *precious*, *celeſtial*, *unſpeakable*, *incorruptible*, *glorious*, *fearful*, *formidable*, *divine;* in the uſe of which Epithets, as we have the warranty and conſent of all the Greek Churches, ſince they ever had a Liturgy; ſo we are taught only to have reverend Uſages and religious Apprehenſions of the Divine Myſteries; but if by any appellative we can learn a Duty, it is one of the beſt ways of entring into the Secret. To

which purpose the Ages Primitive and Apostolical did use the word *Eucharist;* the name and the use we learn from *Origen;* the Bread which is called the *Eucharist*, is the Symbol of our thanksgiving towards God. But it is the great and most usual appellative for the Holy Supper; ὁ ἄρτος εὐχαριστία, ἄρτον εὐχαριστηθέντα, we find in *Ignatius*, St. *Clemens*, *Justin Martyr*, the *Syrian* Paraphrast, *Origen*, and ever after amongst the Greeks, and afterwards amongst the Latins. By him we understand that then we receive great Blessings, since the very Mystery it self obliges us to great thankfulness. I have instanced in this, as an example to the use of the other Epithets and Appellatives, which from Antiquity I have enumerated.

6. He that desires to enter fartheſt into the Secrets of this Mystery, and to understand more than others, can better learn by Love than by Enquiry. *He that keepeth the Law of the Lord, getteth the understanding thereof*, saith the wise *Ben-sirach;* if he will prepare himself diligently, and carefully observe the dispensations of the Spirit, and receive it humbly, and treat it with great reverence, and dwell in the Communion of Saints, and pass through the Mystery with great devotion and purest simplicity, and converse with the purities of the Sacrament frequently, and with holy intention; this man shall understand more by his Experience, than the greatest Clerks can by all their Subtilties, the Commentaries of the Doctors, and the Glosses of inquisitive men; *Obey and ye shall understand*, said the Prophet; and our blessed Saviour assured us,

*that if we continue in his Word, then we ſhall know the truth; and if any man will do his will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God or no. For we have not turned from our iniquities, that we might underſtand the Truth, ſaid* Daniel: *for the love of the Lord* (ſaith the wiſe man) *paſſeth all things for Illumination.*

7. Let no man advance the preaching of the Word of God, to the diſparagement, or to occaſion the neglects of the Sacraments. For though it be true, that Faith comes by hearing, yet it is not intended that by hearing alone Faith is ingendred; for the Faith of the Apoſtles came by ſeeing; and St. *Paul's* Faith did not come by hearing, but by Intuition and Revelation; and *hearing*, in thoſe words of St. *Paul*, does not ſignifie the manner of Miniſtration; but the whole Oeconomy of the Word of God, the whole Office of Preaching; which is done moſt uſually to Babes and Strangers by Sermon or Homily, but more gloriouſly and illuſtriouſly to men, by Sacraments. But however, be it ſo or otherwiſe; yet one Ordinance ought not to exclude the other, much leſs to diſparage the other, and leaſt of all to undervalue that which is the moſt eminent: but rather let every Chriſtian man and woman think, that if the Word miniſtred by the Spirit is ſo mighty, it muſt be more, when the Word and the Spirit joyn with the Sacrament, which is their proper ſignificatory. He that is zealous for the Word of God, does well, but let him remember, that the Word of God is a goodly Ring, and leads us into the Circles of a bleſſed

Eternity; but becauſe the Sacrament is not without the Word, they are a Jewel enchas'd in Gold when they are together. The Miniſtries of the Goſpel are all of a piece, they, though in ſeveral manners, work the ſame Salvation by the conduct of the ſame Spirit.

8. Let no man in the reception of the Sacrament, and in his expectation of Bleſſings and Events from it, limit his Hopes and Belief to any one particular, for that will occaſion a Littleneſs of Faith, and may make it curious, ſcrupulous, and phantaſtical; rather let us adore the ſecret of God, and with ſimple expectations receive it; diſpoſing our ſelves to all the effects, that may come rather with fear and indefinite Apprehenſions, than with dogmatical and confident Limitations; for this may beget ſcruples and diminution of Value; but that hinders nothing, but advances the reverential Treatments and Opinion.

9. He that gueſſes at the excellency and power of the Sacrament, by the events that himſelf feels, muſt be ſure to look for no other than what are *eminently* or *virtually* contained in it; that is, he muſt not expect that the Sacrament will make him rich; or diſcover to him ſtolen Goods, or cure the Tooth-ach, or countercharm Witches, or appeaſe a Tempeſt, if it be thrown into the Sea. Theſe are ſuch events that God hath not made the effects of Religion, but are the hopes and expectations of vain and ſuperſtitious People. And I remember that Pope *Alexander* the Third, in the Council of *Lateran*, wrote to the Biſhop of St. *Agatha* advice,

how to treat a Woman who took the holy Sacrament into her mouth, and ran with it to kiſs her Huſband, hoping by that means to procure her Huſband's more intenſe Affection. But the Story tells, that ſhe was chaſtized by a Miracle, and was not cured but by a long and ſevere Repentance.

10. He that watches for the effects and bleſſings of the Sacrament, muſt look for them in no other manner than what is agreeable to the uſual diſpenſation; we muſt not look for them by meaſures of Nature and uſual Expectation: not that as ſoon as we have received the Symbols, we ſhall have our Doubts anſwered; or be comforted in our Spirit, as ſoon as we have given thanks for the Holy Blood; or be ſatisfied in the enquiries of Faith, as ſoon as the Prayers of Conſecration and the whole Miniſtry is ended; or prevail in our moſt paſſionate deſires, as ſoon as we riſe from our knees; for we enter into the bleſſings of the Sacrament by Prayer, and the exerciſe of proper Graces; both which being ſpiritual Inſtruments of Virtues, work after the manner of ſpiritual Things; that is, not by any meaſure we have, but as God pleaſes; only that in the laſt event of things, and when they are neceſſary, we ſhall find them there: God's time is beſt, but we muſt not judge his manner by our meaſures, nor meaſure Eternity by Time, or the Iſſues of the Spirit by a meaſuring Line. The effects of the Sacrament are to be expected as the effect of Prayers: not one Prayer, or one ſolemn Meeting, but perſevering and paſſionate, fervent and laſting Prayers: a continual Deſire, and a daily

Addreſs is the way of prevailing. *In the Morning ſowe thy Seed, and in the Evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whether they ſhall be both alike good.*

11. He that looks for the effects and bleſſings told of to be appendent to the Sacrament, muſt expect them upon no other terms, but ſuch as are the conditions of a worthy Communion. If thou doſt find thy Faith as dead after the reception as it was before; it may be it is, becauſe thy Faith was not only little, but reprovable; or thou didſt not pray vehemently, or thou art indiſpoſed by ſome ſecret diſadvantage: or thou haſt not done thy duty; and he ſhall imprudently accuſe that Phyſick for uſeleſs and unfit, that is not ſuffered to work by the Incapacity, the ill Diet, the weak Stomach, or ſome evil accident of the Patient.

12. Let no man judge of himſelf, or of the bleſſings and efficacy of the Sacrament itſelf; or of the proſperity and acceptation of his Service in this Miniſtry, by any ſenſible reliſh, by the guſt and deliciouſneſs, which he ſometimes perceives, and other times does not perceive. For theſe are fine accidents, and given to ſome Perſons often, to others very ſeldom, to all irregularly, as God pleaſes, and ſometimes are the effects of natural and accidental Diſpoſitions, and ſometimes are Illuſions. But that no man may fall into inconvenience for want of them, we are to conſider that the want of them proceeds from divers cauſes. 1. It may be the Palate of the Soul is indiſpoſed by liſtleſneſs or

ſorrow, anxiety or wearineſs. 2. It may be we are too much immerged in ſecular affairs and earthly affections. 3. Or we have been unthankful to God, when we have received ſome of theſe ſpiritual pleaſures, and he therefore withdraws thoſe pleaſant Entertainments. 4. Or it may be, we are therefore without reliſh and guſt, becauſe the Sacrament is too great for our weakneſs, like the bright Sun to a mortal eye; the Object is too big for our perceptions, and our little faculties. 5. Sometimes God takes them away, leſt we be lifted up and made vain. 6. Sometimes for the confirmation and exerciſe of our Faith; that we may live by Faith and not by Senſe. 7. Or it may be that by this dryneſs of Spirit, God intends to make us the more fervent and reſigned in our direct and ſolemn Devotions, by the perceiving of our wants and weakneſs, and in the infinite inability, and inſufficiency of ourſelves. 8. Or elſe it happens to us irremediably and inevitably, that we may perceive theſe accidents are not the fruits of our labour, but gifts of God, diſpenced wholly by the meaſures of his own choice. 9. The want of juſt and ſevere diſpoſitions to the Holy Sacrament, may poſſibly occaſion this Uncomfortableneſs. 10. Or we do not reliſh the divine nutriment now, ſo as at other times, for want of ſpiritual Maſtication, that is, becauſe we have not conſidered deeply, and meditated wiſely and holily. 11. Or there is in us too much ſelf-love and delight in, and adherence to the comforts we find in other objects. 12. Or we are careleſs of little ſins, and give too much way

to the daily Incurſions of the ſmaller Irregularities of our lives. If upon the occaſion of the want of theſe ſenſible comforts and delightful reliſhes, we examine the cauſes of the want, and ſuſpect our ſelves in theſe things, where our own faults may be the cauſes, and there make amends; or if we ſubmit ourſelves in thoſe particulars where the cauſes may relate to God, we ſhall do well, and receive profit. But unleſs our own ſin be the cauſe of it, we are not to make any evil judgment of our ſelves, by reaſon of any ſuch defect; much leſs diminiſh our great value of the bleſſings, conſequent to a worthy Communion.

13. But becauſe the pardon of ſins is intended to be the great effect of a worthy Communion, and of this men are more ſolicitous, and for this they pray paſſionately, and labour earneſtly, and almoſt all their lives, and it may be in the day of their death, have uncertain Souls; and therefore of this men are moſt deſirous to be ſatisfied, if they apprehend themſelves in danger, that is, if they be convinced of their ſin, and be truly penitent; although this effect ſeems to be leaſt diſcernable, and to be a ſecret reſerved for the publication and Trumpet of the Arch-Angel at the day of Doom; yet in this we can beſt be ſatisfied. For becauſe when our ſins are unpardoned, we are under the wrath of God, to be expreſſed as he pleaſes, and in the method of eternal death: now if God intends not to pardon us, he will not bleſs the means of pardon; if we ſhall not return to his final pardon, if we ſhall not paſs through the intermedial;

if he will never give us Glory, he will never give us the increaſe of Grace. If therefore we repent of our ſins, and pray for pardon: if we confeſs them and forſake them: if we fear God and love him: if we find that our deſires to pleaſe him do increaſe, that we are more watchful againſt ſin, and hate it more: that we are thirſty after righteouſneſs: if we find that we increaſe in duty; then we may look upon the tradition of the holy Sacramental Symbols, as a direct conſignation of Pardon; not that it is compleated; for it is a work of time, it is as long in doing, as Repentance is in perfecting; it is the effect of that, depending on its cauſe in a perpetual operation, but it is then working, and if we go on in duty, God will proceed to finiſh methods of his Grace, and ſnatch us from eternal death, which we have deſerved, and bring us unto Glory. And this he is pleaſed by the Sacrament all the way to conſign: God ſpeaks not more articulately in any voice from Heaven, than in ſuch real indications of his Love and Favour.

14. Laſtly, ſince the Sacrament is the great ſolemnity of Prayer, and imitation of Chriſt's interceſſion in Heaven; let us here be both charitable and religious in our Prayers; interceding for all ſtates of Men and Women in the Chriſtian Church, and repreſenting to God all the needs of our ſelves and of our Relatives. For then we pray with all the advantages of the Spirit, when we pray in the Faith of Chriſt crucified, in the love of God and of our Neighbour, in the Advantages of ſolemn Piety, in the Communion of Saints, in the imita-

tion of Chriſt's interceſſion, and in the Union with Chriſt himſelf Spiritual and Sacramental; and to ſuch Prayers as theſe nothing can be added, but that which will certainly come, that is a bleſſed Hearing, and a gracious Anſwer.

## Section VI.—*Devotions preparatory to this Myſtery.*

### Ejaculations.

1.

I WILL praiſe thee with my whole heart; before the Angels will I ſing praiſe unto thee.

2. I will worſhip towards thy holy Temple, and praiſe thy name for thy loving kindneſs, and for thy Truth, for thou haſt magnified, above all thy Name, the Word of thy Praiſe.

3. In the day when I call upon thee, thou ſhalt anſwer, and ſhalt multiply ſtrength in my Soul.

4. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God: how great is the ſum of them! The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercies, O Lord, endure for ever.

5. I wait for the Lord: my Soul doth wait, and in his Word do I hope.

6. My Soul doth wait for the Lord more than they that keep the Morning Watches, that they may obſerve the time of offering the Morning Sacrifices.

7. O let my Soul hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption: he ſhall redeem his People from all Iniquity.

II.

1. Our Lord is gentle and juſt: our God is merciful.

2. The Lord keepeth the ſimple: I was humbled, but the Lord looked after my Redemption.

3. O my Soul, return thou unto thy reſt: becauſe the Lord hath reſtored his good things unto thee.

4. He hath ſnatched my Soul from death, mine Eyes from tears, and my Feet from falling: I will therefore walk before the Lord in the Land of the living.

5. I have believed, therefore will I ſpeak: in the Aſſemblies of juſt men I will greatly praiſe the Lord.

6. What ſhall I return unto the Lord? all his Retributions are repayed upon me.

7. I will bear the Chalice of Redemption in the Kingdom of God: and in the Name of the Lord I will call upon my God.

III.

1. I will pay my Vows unto the Lord: I will then ſhew forth his Sacraments unto all the People.

2. Honourable before the Lord is the death of his Holy one: and thereby thou haſt broken all my Chains.

3. I have ſworn, and I will perform it: that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.

4. I will greatly praiſe the Lord with my Mouth, yea I will praiſe him among the Multitude.

5. For he ſhall ſtand at the right hand of the poor: to ſave him from them that condemn his Soul.

6. His Work is honourable and glorious, and his Righteouſneſs remaineth for ever: He hath made his wonderful Works to be remembered.

7. The Lord is gracious and full of compaſſion: he hath given meat unto them that fear him: he will be ever mindful of his Covenant: he hath ſhewed his People the Power of his Works: bleſſed be God.

## Prayers to be uſed in any Day or Time of Preparation to the Holy Sacrament.

I.

*O Thou Shepherd of Iſrael, thou that feedeſt us like Sheep; thou makeſt us to lie down in pleaſant Paſtures, and leadeſt us by the ſtill Waters, running from the Clefts of the Rock, from the Wounds of our Lord, from the Fountains of Salvation; thou preпareſt a Table for us, and anointeſt our Heads with the Unction from above, and our Cup runneth over: let the Blood of thy Wounds, and the Water of thy Side, waſh me clean, that I may with a pure clean Soul come to eat of the pureſt Sacrifice, the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the World.*

II.

*Thou giveſt thy ſelf to be the Food of our Souls in the wonders of the Sacrament, in the Faith of thy Word, in the Bleſſings and Graces of thy Spirit; Perform that in thy Servant, which thou haſt prepared and effected in thy Son; ſtrengthen my infirmities, heal my Sickneſſes, give me ſtrength to ſubdue my Paſſions, to mortifie my Inordinations, to kill all my Sins: Increaſe thy Graces in my Soul; enkindle a bright Devotion, extinguiſh all the Fires of Hell, my Luſt and my Pride, my Envy, and all my ſpiritual Wickedneſſes; pardon all my Sins, and fill me with thy Spirit, that by thy Spirit thou mayſt dwell in me, and by Obedience and Love I may dwell in thee, and live in the Life of Grace, till it paſs on to Glory and Immenſity, by the Power and the Bleſſing, by the Paſſion and Interceſſion of the Word incarnate; whom I adore, and whom I love, and whom I will ſerve for ever and ever.*

III.

*O Myſterious God, ineffable and glorious Majeſty; What is this that thou haſt done to the Sons of Men? thou haſt from thy Boſom ſent thy Son to take upon him our Nature; in whom thou haſt opened the Fountains of thy Mercy, and haſt invited all penitent ſinners to come to be pardoned, all the oppreſſed to be eaſed, all the ſorrowful to be comforted, all the ſick to be cured, all the hungry to be filled, and the thirſty to be refreſhed with the Waters of Life, and ſuſtained with the Wine of ſelect Souls: admit me, O God, to this great effuſion of loving kindneſs, that I may par-*

*take of the Lord Jesus, that by him I may be comforted in all my Griefs, satisfied in all my Doubts; healed of all the Wounds of my Soul, and the bruises of my Spirit; and being filled with the Bread of Heaven, and armed with the strength of the Spirit, I may begin, continue, and finish my Journey through this Valley of Tears, unto my portion of thy Heavenly Kingdom, whither our Lord is gone before to prepare a place for every loving and obedient Soul. Grant this, O Eternal God, for his sake who died for us, and intercedes for us, and gives himself dayly to us, our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Amen.

## CHAPTER II.

*Of our General Preparation to the Worthy Reception of the Bleſſed Sacrament, the Participation of the Myſteries.*

IN all the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, there are no words of particular duty relating to the Bleſſed Sacrament, and expreſſing the manner of our addreſs to the Myſteries, but thoſe few words of St. *Paul, Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat.* The Apoſtle expreſſes one Duty, and intimates another. The Duty of Preparation is expreſſed; and becauſe this is a relative Duty, and is not for it ſelf, but for ſomething beyond, he implies the other to be the great Duty, to which this Preparation does but miniſter. 1. A man muſt examine himſelf. 2. And a man muſt eat. A man muſt not eat of theſe Myſteries, till he be examined; for that were dangerous, and may prove fatal: but when a man is examined, he muſt eat; for elſe that Examination were to no purpoſe.

## Section I.—*Of Examination of our Selves, in order to the Holy Communion.*

THERE is no duty in Chriſtianity, that is partly ſolemn and partly moral, that hath in it more ſolemnity and more morality than this one duty; and in the greateſt declenſion of Religion, ſtill men have fear when they come to receive this Holy Sacrament. They that have no Religion will fear when they come to die; and they who have but a little, will fear when they come to communicate. But although men, who believe this to be the greateſt ſecret and ſacredneſs of our Religion, do more in their addreſſes to this than to anything elſe, yet many of them that do come, conſider that they are only commanded to examine themſelves; and *that* according to the ordinary methods is eaſily done. It is nothing but aſking our ſelves a few Queſtions: Do I believe? Do I repent? And am I in Charity? To theſe the Anſwers are ready enough; I do believe that Chriſt gave his Body and Blood for me, as for all mankind; and that Chriſt is myſtically preſent in the Sacrament; I have been taught ſo all my life, and I have no reaſon to doubt it. 2. I do alſo repent according to the meaſures I am taught: I am ſorry I have ſinned, I wiſh I had not done it; and I promiſe to do ſo no more; and this I do conſtantly before every Communion, and before the

next comes I have reaſon enough to renew my Vows; I was never ſo good as my word yet, but now I will. 3. I am alſo in Charity with all the World, and againſt this good time, I pray to God to forgive them; for I do. This is the uſual examination of Conſciences; to which we add a faſting day, and on that we ſay more Prayers than uſual, and read ſome good diſcourſes of the Sacrament, and then we are dreſſed like the friends of the Bridegroom, and with confidence come to the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb. But this examination, hath it ſelf need to be examined. *Noah* laboured an hundred years together, in making the Ark, that he and a few more might be ſaved; and can we think in an hour to prepare our ſouls for the entertainment of him that made all the World? This will very hardly be done. For although our duty of preparation is contained in this one word, of [*Try*, or *Examine*] it being after the manner of myſteries, myſteriouſly and ſecretly deſcribed, yet there is great reaſon to believe, that there is in it very much duty, and therefore we ſearch into the ſecret of the Word, and to what purpoſes it is uſed in the New Teſtament.

1. It ſignifies to try and ſearch, to enter into the depths and ſecrets, the varieties and ſeparations and diviſibilities of things. The word is taken from the tryers of Gold, which is tryed by the Touch-ſtone, and in great caſes is tryed by the fire. And in this ſenſe St. *Paul* might relate to the preſent condition of the Chriſtians, who were often under a fiery tryal. For the holy Communion

being uſed by the Primitive Chriſtians according to its intention, was indeed a great Conſolation to the Martyrs and Confeſſors, as appears often in St. *Cyprian:* and this Bleſſing and Deſign was myſtically repreſented to the Church in the circumſtance of the Inſtitution, it being done immediately before the Paſſion: they who were to paſs through this fiery Tryal, ought to examine themſelves againſt this Solemnity, in order to that laſt Tryal, and ſee whether or no they were Veſſels of Sanctification and Honour, for none elſe were fit to communicate, but they alſo that were fit to die. Chriſt would give himſelf to none but to them who are ready to give themſelves for him; according to that ſaying of Chriſt; *If any hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and ſup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me, &c.* That is, thoſe who are tried by the experiments of great Love, and a great patience, that out of love are willing to ſuffer, and with patience do ſuffer unto the end; theſe are the Gueſts at my Heavenly Table: for labour and affrightment put a price upon the Martyr's Crown, while his virtue grows in danger, and like the Water-plants ever grow higher than the Floods. Now the uſe that we can make of this ſenſe of the word is, that we alſo are to examine what we are likely to be, or what we have been in the day of Perſecution; how we have paſſed through the fire? Did we contract the ſmell of fire, or the pollution of ſmoak? Or are we improved by the purification of the diſcerning flames? Did we do our duties then, and then

learn to do them better? Or did we then only like glaſs, bend in all the flexures and mobilities of the flame, and then mingle with the Aſhes, incorporating with the intereſts and fouleſt pollutions of the World? Or were we like Gold, patient of the Hammer, and approved by the Stone of tryal? Like Gold in the fire, did we untwiſt our ſelves from all complications and mixtures with impure droſs? Certain it is, that by perſecution and by money men are in all capacities and relations, beſt examined how they are in their Religion and their Juſtice.

Sometimes God tries his Friends as we try one another, by the infelicities of our lives; when we are unhappy in our affliction, if we be not unhappy in our Friend too, he is a right good one, and God will eſteem of us ſo, if we can ſay with *David*, *Though thou haſt ſmitten us into the place of Dragons, yet have we not forgotten thee*, and *my Soul is alway in my hand*, that is, I am always in danger and trouble, and I bear death about me, *yet do I not forſake thy Commandments*. This indeed is God's way of Examination of us; but that's all one; for we muſt examine our ſelves here in order to our duty and ſtate of being, as God will examine us hereafter, in order to what we have been and done. And there is no greater teſtimony of our being fit to receive Chriſt, than when we are ready to die for him. But this is a final tryal; we muſt have ſome ſteps of progreſſion, before we come thus far.

2. There is a way ſomething leſs than this, *Lycurgus* inſtituted among the *Spartans*, that the

Princes, the Magiſtrates, the Soldiers, and every Citizen that was capable of Dignity ſhould be tryed; *They examined their lives, whether they had lived according to the rate of their Employment or pretenſions;* and thoſe who were ſo examined were called δοκιμαδέντες, tried and examined men; and if they were Perſons quitting themſelves like men, they were aſcribed in the number of the good Citizens. That is our way, to try whether we be inſtructed and rightly prepared to this good Work, and that is to be examined by a courſe and order of good Works, that was the old and true way of examining.

For examination is but a relative duty, and nothing of it ſelf; for no man is the better for being examined, if being examined there follows nothing after it. He that is examined, either muſt be approved, or elſe in St. *Paul's* phraſe he is ἀδόκιμος, a Reprobate; and to what purpoſe is it that every man ſhould examine himſelf, but in caſe that he find himſelf unfit, to abſtain and forbear to come; for if he comes unworthy, he dies for it; and therefore to *Examine* muſt ſignifie, Let every man examine himſelf, ſo that he be approved; and ſo the word is uſed by St. *Paul*, Happy is he that doth not condemn himſelf *in that which he approveth.* The word ſignifies both to examine and to prove, that is indeed to examine as wiſe men ſhould; [δοκιμάσας ἀντὶ τοῦ κρίνας, ſaith *Suidas*] it is all one as to judge righteous Judgment after due examination; and that is expreſly added by the Apoſtle, in the ſame Chapter, after the Precept of Examina-

tion, *Judge your ſelves that you be not judged of the Lord;* that is, your examination of your ſelves will prevent the horrors of the eternal Scrutiny; your condemnation of your ſins, will prevent God's condemnation of you for them; and then when you examine ſo as to judge, and ſo condemn your ſins that you approve your ſelves to God and your own Conſciences, then you have examined rightly.

The ſenſe then is this: Let a man examine and prove himſelf, whether he be fit to come to the holy Communion, and ſo let him eat, not ſo if upon examination he be found unfit: but becauſe it is intended he ſhould come, and yet muſt not come without due and juſt Preparations, let him who comes to the holy Communion, be ſure that he worthily prepare himſelf.

Theſe then are the great Inquiries: 1. How a man ſhall ſo examine himſelf, as to know whether he be fit or no. 2. What are thoſe neceſſary Diſpoſitions without which a man cannot be worthily prepared. The firſt will repreſent the general Rules of Preparation. The ſecond Inquiry will conſider the more particular.

## Section II. —*Of the Examination of our Deſires.*

EVERY one that comes to the holy Sacrament, muſt have earneſt affections and deſires towards God and Religion, and particularly towards theſe Divine Myſteries; and

therefore he muſt examine accordingly, whether or no he be willing and paſſionately deſirous to do all his duty? His ſaying that he is ſo, I do not ſuppoſe to be a ſufficient ſatisfaction to a ſerious Inquiry, unleſs he really feels himſelf to be ſo. For we find that all men pretend that they have earneſt deſires to be ſaved; and very many eſpying the Beauties of Wiſdom, the Brightneſs of Chaſtity, the Health of Temperance, the Peace of meek Perſons, and the Reputation and Joy of the Charitable; wiſh that they were ſuch excellent Perſons. But they conſider not, that it is the Splendor, not the Vertue; the Reputation, not the Uſefulneſs; the Reward, and not the Duty that they are in love withal: our deſires of Holineſs are too often like our deſires of being cut of the Stone, or ſuffering Cauſticks or Cupping-glaſſes, an unwilling willingneſs, a hard and a fatal neceſſity, and therefore ſomething of a conſequent choice; ſince it can be no better, it muſt be no worſe: but this can never make our Duty pleaſant, we can never be heartily reconciled for the things of God as long as we feel ſmart and pain in the Miniſtries of Religion: we *ſuffer* Religion, and endure the Laws of God, but we *love* them not. He that comes to God whether he will or no, confeſſes the greatneſs of God and the demonſtrations of Religion, but ſees no amability and comelineſs in it; and ſhall find as little of the reward.

It is true that force and fear may bring us in to God; and *the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wiſdom;* and Chriſt ſaid, *compel them to enter*, and

our natural needs, and our ſuperinduced calamities may force us to run to God, and affright us into Religion as into a Sanctuary: but then if we enter at this door we muſt examine whether we be taken with the beauties of the interior houſe; does Fear make us look, and does Looking make us like? If holy deſires and love be not in the beginning or the progreſſion, we ſhall do the work of Grace pitifully, and our preparations coldly, and our attentions diſtractedly, and receive the Sacraments without effect.

Now concerning our deſires, we ſhall beſt judge of them by the proper effects and ſignifications of Deſire.

### *Signs and Indications of the Sincerity and Heartineſs of our Deſires.*

Are his affections warm and earneſt, inquiſitive and longing, intereſted and concerned in the things of God? I do not ſay it is neceſſary, that he find thoſe paſſions and degrees of fierceneſs, which paſſionate Perſons find in ſenſual objects. But yet it is very fit that we enquire concerning thoſe degrees and exceſſes of Deſire; not that he is unfit who finds them not; but that they who have them, can alſo receive comfort in their Inquiry, and become examples to others, and invite them forwards by the Argument of Amability which they feel.

But our paſſions and deſires are ſo to be inquired of, that we find no reſt in our Souls concerning this Queſtion, unleſs we do indeed ſet a high value upon

theſe Myſteries; and love to partake of them and deſire them reaſonably, and without very great cauſe not to omit the opportunities which the Church gives and requires us to uſe, and to exceed the loweſt meaſure of the Law; for he that only communicates when he is commanded, communicates in obedience but not in love; for though obedience to God is love, yet our obedience to man is moſt commonly *fear;* at leaſt we cannot ſo well be ſure that we are paſſionate enough, and have love enough to theſe Myſteries, when the Law of men, that is, when ſomething *without* is our meaſure. For Eccleſiaſtical Laws have Neceſſity moſt commonly for their limit; and that is the leaſt of all holy meaſures, leſs than their determination we cannot go and be innocent: but if we will make judgment concerning our love and our deſires, we muſt frequent theſe holy Myſteries by the meaſures and ſuggeſtion of ſomething that is *within;* if it be Love, it will have no meaſures but it ſelf, and nothing can give it limits, but the circumſtances of things themſelves, and the poſſibilities of our Perſons and Affairs.

2. Beſides this coming upon neceſſity, our Deſires are very much to be ſuſpected, if compliance and cuſtom or reputation be the ingredients, and prevail above any better motive that can be obſerved. As force makes Hypocrites, ſo favour and ſecular advantages, make Flatterers in Religion; and when a Prince or Ruler, a Maſter of a Family, or any one that hath power to oblige, is heartily religious, Religion will quickly be in faſhion.

Thoſe Perſons which come upon ſuch Inducements, are by our bleſſed Saviour ſignified by the Parable of the Corn that fell by the High-way; they preſently receive it with joy, and it ſprings quickly if the Sun ſhines, but when Perſecution comes, they hang the Head, and ſlack their pace, and appear ſeldom, and ſhew that they had no depth of Root. Theſe men ſerve God when Religion is rich and proſperous, they come to Chriſt for the Loaves, but care but little for the Myſtery. As long as the Religion ſtays at this Port, it is good for nothing, and the very entry it ſelf is ſuſpicious, Fear is better than this, but if it paſs on to create an effective and material Love, it will be well at laſt.

3. They that are eaſily diverted from communicating, and apt to be excuſed from the Solemnity, theſe men have juſt cauſe to ſuſpect their deſires, to be too cold to kindle the fires upon this Altar, and to conſume this Sacrifice; they have not love, and come againſt their will: Some men are hindred by every thing; if a Stranger come to the Houſe, if they be indiſpoſed with a little Headach, if they have Affairs of the World, if a Neighbour be angry with them, if a merry meeting be appointed the day before; this is a ſuſpicious Indifferency and Lukewarmneſs. They that are not deſirous to uſe all opportunities, and to take all advantages, and long for all the benefits, want very much of that hunger and thirſt after the Righteouſneſs of God, which is fulfilled in thoſe Myſteries, and to which Chriſt hath promiſed ſuch ample ſatisfaction. I do not ſay, that every man is bound

to communicate every time that he can have it, and that it is Lukewarmneſs not to deſire it ſo often as it is in our power, but he that refuſes it, when it is in his opportunity, when his circumſtances are fitted, when by the meaſures of Piety and Religion, it is decent and uſeful to him to do it (of which I ſhall afterwards give an account) that man is guilty of a criminal Indifference, and when he does come, may fear that he hath not ſpiritual hunger enough for ſo divine a Banquet.

4. They that in their Preparation take the leaſt meaſures that are practiſed or allowed, and reſt there and increaſe not, have neither value for the Sacrament, nor deſires of the Bleſſing, nor expectations of any Fruit; and therefore cannot have this holy appetite in due proportion, becauſe they ſee no ſufficient moving cauſe, and they look for little, and find leſs, and therefore can never be true deſirers: For he that thinks there is no great matter in it, will have no great ſtomach for it; and he that will do no great matter for it, certainly expects no great excellency in it; and ſuch are all they that take the leaſt meaſures of Preparation; who therefore ſhall find the leaſt meaſures of bleſſing, and in ſpiritual things that which is called *poſitively* the leaſt, is juſt none at all; he that *ſhall be called leaſt in the Kingdom*, ſhall be quite ſhut out. This is an indifferency both in the cauſe and in the effect: They feel no great Bleſſings conſequent to their reception, and therefore their Affections are cold, and becauſe they are ſo, they ſhall for ever be without the Bleſſing.

5. They only can be confident that their Deſires are right, who feel ſharpneſſes and zeal in their acts of Love. For in ſpiritual things every abatement is by the mixture of the contrary, and therefore when things are indifferent, we cannot tell which ſhall be accepted or accounted of; and when there is as much evil as good, the evil is only abated, but the good deſtroyed, and is not accepted; and therefore till the Victory be clear and evident, we cannot have much comfort; but the ſtrong deſire is only certain and comfortable to the Spirit. Great Deſires are a great Pain, and the *Spouſe* in the *Canticles* complains that ſhe is *ſick of love*, and then calls upon Chriſt to *comfort her with flagons of Wine*. Leſs deſires than the greateſt, if they be real and effective of the work, are fit for ſuch Perſons as are not the greateſt in Religion; but in all Spiritual Progreſſions we are ſure our deſires ſhall never ceaſe growing, till they be full of God, and are ſwelled up to Immenſity; and till they come to ſome greatneſs, that they are like hunger and thirſt, or like the Breaſts of a fruitful Nurſe, full and in pain till they be eaſed, we cannot be ſo confident that things are well with us in this particular. Are we in trouble, till we converſe with our Lord in all the ways of Spiritual Intercourſe? Do we rejoice when a Communion-day comes? And is our Joy fixed upon conſideration of that holy neceſſity of doing good Works at that time eſpecially, and receiving the Aids of Grace, and the Helps of the Sacrament liberally? When it is thus, it is well; that we can be ſure of: All meaſures of

deſire which are ſo little, that we can compare them to no natural ſimilitude of earneſtneſs and Appetite, we can only ſay that they are yet very uncomfortable; and if we come often and pray that we may have lively reliſh and appetite to the Myſteries, it may be well in time; but as yet we cannot be ſure that it is ſo.

There is only in this caſe one help to our Examination and our Confidence: He that comes becauſe God commands him, in a direct and certain Obedience to the words of Chriſt, or in a deep ſorrow for his ſins, coming either in hopes of remedy, or in a great apprehenſion of his infirmity, addreſſing himſelf either for ſupport and ſtrength; this man, although he feels no ſenſual punctures and natural ſharpneſſes of deſire, yet he comes well, and upon a right Principle: For St. *Auſtin* reckoning what prædiſpoſition is neceſſary by way of preparation to the holy Sacrament, reckons *hunger, and the ſenſe of our ſins and our infirmities;* but if he wants the pleaſure of theſe paſſionate Indications, he muſt be careful that he be ſure in the intellectual and religious choice; for that is the thing which is intended to be ſignified by all the exterior paſſions: but when he hath no ſign, he muſt be the more careful he have the thing ſignified, and then all is right again.

But happy is that Soul which comes to theſe Springs of Salvation, as the Hart to the Waterbrooks, panting and thirſty, longing and paſſionate, weary of ſin, and hating vanity, and reaching out the heart and hands to Chriſt; and this we are

taught by the ſame Myſtery repreſented under other Sacraments; the Waters of the Spiritual Rock, of which our Fathers drank in the Wilderneſs; the Rock was Chriſt, and thoſe Waters were his Blood in the Sacrament: and with the ſame appetite they drank thoſe Sacramental Waters withal, we are to receive theſe Divine Myſteries Evangelical.

Now let us by the Aids of Memory and Fancy conſider the Children of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, in a barren and dry Land where no Water was, march in duſt and fire, not wet with the dew of Heaven, wholly without moiſture, ſave only what dropt from their own brows; the Air was fire, and the Vermin was fire; the flying Serpents were of the ſame cognation with the firmament, their ſting was a flame, their venom was a Fever, and the Fever a Calenture, and their whole ſtate of abode and travel was a little Image of the day of Judgment, when the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat: Theſe men like Salamanders walking in fire, dry with heat, and ſcorched with thirſt, and made yet more thirſty by calling upon God for Water; ſuppoſe, I ſay, theſe thirſty Souls hearing *Moſes* to promiſe that he will ſmite the Rock, and that a River ſhould break forth from thence, obſerve how preſently they ran to the foot of the ſpringing Stone, thruſting forth their heads and tongues to meet the Water, impatient of delay, crying out that the Water did not move like Light, all at once; and then ſuppoſe the pleaſure of their drink, the unſatiableneſs of their deſire, the immenſity of their appetite; they took in as much

as they could, and they desired much more. This was their Sacrament of the same Mystery, and this was their manner of receiving it, and this teaches us to come to the same Christ with the same desires. For if that Water was a Type of our Sacrament, or a Sacrament of the same secret blessing; then that thirst is a signification of our duty, that we come to receive Christ in all the ways of reception with longing appetites, preferring him before all the Interests of the World, as Birds do Corn above Jewels, or hungry men Meat before long Orations.

For it is worth observing, that there being in the Old Testament thirteen Types and Umbrages of this holy Sacrament, eleven of them are of Meat and Drink: such are the Tree of Life in the midst of Paradise; the Bread and Wine of *Melchisedeck;* the fine Meal that *Sarah* kneaded for the Angel's Entertainment; the Manna; and the roasted Paschal Lamb, the springing Rock, and the Bread of Proposition to be eaten by the Priests; the Barley Cake in the Host of *Midian; Samson's* Father's Oblation upon the Rock, the Honey-comb that opened the eyes of *Jonathan*, and the Bread which the Angel brought to *Elijah*, in the strength of which he was to live forty days; all this is to shew, that the Sacrament is the Life of the Spiritual Man, and the Food of his Soul, the Light of his Eyes, and the Strength of his Heart; and not only all this, and very much more of this nature, but to represent our Duty also, and the great Principle of Preparation: Meat is the Object, and Hunger

is the Addreſs. The Wine is the Wine of Angels; but if you deſire it not, what ſhould you do with it; for the Wine that is not to ſatisfy your need, can do nothing but firſt miniſter to Vanity, and then to Vice; firſt to Wantonneſs, and then to Drunkenneſs.

St. *Auſtin* expreſſing the affections of his Mother *Monicha* to the Bleſſed Sacrament, ſays, *That her Soul was the Ligatures of Faith, united ſo firmly to the Sacrifice, which is diſpenſed in the Lord's Supper, that a Lion or a Dragon could not drag her away from thence;* and it was ſaid of St. *Catherine, That ſhe went to the Sacraments as a ſucking Infant to his Mother's breaſts:* and this Similitude St. *Chryſoſtom* expreſſes elegantly, [*See you not with what pretty earneſtneſs and alacrity Infants ſnatch their Nurſe's breaſt? How they thruſt their lips into the fleſh, (like the ſting of a Bee.) Let us approach to this Table with no leſs deſire, and with no leſs ſuck the Nipple of the holy Chalice; yet with greater deſire let us ſuck the Grace of the Holy Spirit.*] And it is reported that our Bleſſed Lord taught St. *Mechtildis, When you are to receive the holy Communion, deſire and wiſh to the praiſe of my Name, to have all deſire and all love that ever was kindled in any heart towards me, and ſo come to me; for ſo will I inflame, and ſo will I accept thy love, not as it is, but as thou deſireſt it ſhould be in thee.*

*Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden,* ſaith Chriſt, that is, they that groan under the burden of their ſins, and feel the load of their infirmities, and deſire pardon and remedy, they that

love the Inſtruments of Graces as they are Channels of Salvation: they that come to the Sacrament out of earneſt deſires to receive the bleſſings of Chriſt's Death, and of his Interceſſion, theſe are the welcome Gueſts; for ſo, ſaith God, *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*, for *he hath filled the hungry with good things*, ſaid the holy Virgin Mother; for Chriſt is food and refreſhment to none elſe: for the full he hath ſent empty away.

If therefore you underſtand your danger, and deeply reſent the evil of your infirmities and ſinful ſtate; if you confeſs yourſelves miſerable, and have all correſponding apprehenſions; if you long for Remedy, and would have it upon any terms; if you be hungry at your very heart, and would fain have food and phyſick, health and ſpiritual advantages; if you underſtand what you need, and deſire what you underſtand; if theſe deſires be as great as they are reaſonable, and as laſting as they are great; if they be as inquiſitive as they are laſting, and as operative as they are inquiſitive, that is, if they be juſt and reaſonable purſuances of the means of grace; if they carry you by freſh and active appetites to the Communion, and that this may be to purpoſe, if they fix you upon ſuch methods, as will make the Communion effect that which God deſigned, and which we need, then we ſhall perceive the bleſſings and fruits of our holy deſires; according to thoſe words of *David* (as it is rendered in the vulgar Latin) *the Lord hath heard the deſire of the poor; and his ear hath hearkened to the preparation of their heart.* An earneſt deſire is a good

preparation, and God will attend unto it. Concerning this therefore we are firſt to examine ourſelves. Upon the account of our earneſt deſires, it is ſeaſonable to enquire, whether to communicate frequently, be an inſtance of that holy Deſire which we ought to have to theſe ſacred Myſteries? and whether all men be bound to communicate frequently, and what meaſure is the ſafeſt and beſt in this enquiry? But becauſe the Anſwer to this depends upon ſome other Propoſitions of differing Matter, I reſerve it to its proper place, where it will be a conſequent of thoſe Propoſitions.

## Section III.—*Of our Examination concerning Remanent Affections to Sin.*

*He that deſires to communicate worthily, muſt examine himſelf, whether there be not in him any affection to ſin remaining.* This examination is not any part of Repentance, but a trial of it; for of preparatory repentance, I ſhall give larger accounts in its own place; but now we are to try whether that duty be done, that if it be, we may come; if not, we may be remanded, and go away till we have performed it; for he that comes, muſt have repented firſt; but now he is to be examined, whether he have or no done that work ſo materially, that it is alſo proſperouſly; that is, whether he have done it, not only ſolemnly and ritually, but effectively; whether he have ſo waſhed,

that he is indeed clean, from any foul and polluting principle.

When the Heathens offered a Sacrifice to their falſe gods, they would make a ſevere ſearch, to ſee if there were any crookedneſs or ſpot, any uncleanneſs or deformity in their Sacrifice. The Prieſt was wont to handle the liver, and ſearch the throbbing heart; he enquires if the blood ſprings right, and if the lungs be ſound, he thruſts his hand into the region of the lower belly, and looks if there be an ulcer, or a ſchyrrus, a ſtone, or a bed of gravel. Now the obſervation which *Tertullian* makes upon theſe Sacrificial Rites is pertinent to this Rule. When your impure Prieſts look after a pure Sacrifice, why do they not rather enquire into their own heart than into the lamb's appurtenance? Why do they not aſk after the Luſt of the Sacrificers, more than the little Spot upon the Bull's Liver? The rites of Sacrifices were but the monitions of duty; and the Prieſt's enquiry into the purity of the beaſt, was but a precept repreſented in ceremony and hieroglyphick, commanding us to take care that the man be not leſs pure and perfect than the beaſt. For if an unclean man brings a clean Sacrifice, the Sacrifice ſhall not cleanſe the man, but the man will pollute the Sacrifice; let them bring to God a ſoul pure and ſpotleſs, leſt when God eſpying a ſoul humbly lying before the Altar, and finding it to be polluted with a remaining filthineſs, or the reproaches of a ſin, he turns away his head and hates the Sacrifice. And God, who taught the Sons of *Iſrael* in figures and ſha-

dows, and required of the Levitical Prieſts to come to God clean and whole, ſtraight, and with perfect bodies, meant to tell us, that this bodily precept in a carnal Law, does in a ſpiritual Religion ſignify a ſpiritual Purity. For God is never called the lover of bodies, but *the great lover of ſouls;* and he that comes to redeem our ſouls from ſin and death, from ſhame and reproach, would have our ſouls brought to him as he loves them: An unclean ſoul is a deformity in the eyes of God; it is indeed ſpiritually diſcerned, but God hath no other eyes but what are ſpirits and flames of fire.

Here therefore it concerns us to examine ourſelves ſtrictly and ſeverely, always remembering that to examine ourſelves (as is here intended) is not a duty completed by examining; for this carries us on to the Sacrament, or returns us to the mortifications of repentance.

But ſometimes our ſins are ſo notorious, that they go before unto judgment and condemnation, and they need no examining; and whatſoever is not done againſt our wills, cannot be beſides our knowledge, and ſo cannot need *examination* but *remembering* only; and therefore I do not call upon the drunkard to examine himſelf concerning temperance, or the wanton concerning his uncleanneſs, or the oppreſſor concerning his cruel covetouſneſs, or the cuſtomary ſwearer concerning his profaneneſs. No man needs much enquiry, to know whether a man be alive or dead, when he hath loſt a vital part.

But this caution is given to the returning ſinner,

to the repenting man, to him that weeps for his ſins, and leaves what was the ſhame of his face, and the reproach of his heart. For we are quickly apt to think we are waſhed enough, and having remembered our ſhameful falls, we groan in method, and weep at certain times; we bid ourſelves be ſorrowful, and tune our heart-ſtrings to the accent and key of the preſent ſolemnity; and as ſorrow enters in a dreſs and imagery when we bid her, ſo ſhe goes away when the ſcene is done. Here, here it is that we are to examine whether ſhows do make a real change; whether ſhadows can be ſubſtances, and whether to begin a good work ſplendidly can effect all the purpoſes of its deſignation. Have you wept for your ſin, ſo that you were indeed ſorrowful and afflicted in your ſpirit? Are you ſo ſorrowful, that you hate it? Do you ſo hate it, that you have left it? And have you ſo left it, that you have left it all, and will you do ſo for ever? Theſe are Particulars worth the enquiring after. How then ſhall we know?

*Signs by which we may examine and tell whether our affections to ſin remain.*

1. Becauſe in examining our ſelves concerning this, we can never be ſure but by the event of things, and the heart being deceitful above all things, we ſecretly love what we profeſs to hate; we deny our lovers, and deſire they ſhould ſtill preſs us, we command away the ſin from our preſence, for which we die if it ſtays away; therefore

while we are in this preparatory duty of Examination, the beſt Sign whereby we can reaſonably ſuppoſe all affection to ſin to be gone away, is if we really believe, that we ſhall never any more commit that ſin to which we are moſt tempted, and moſt inclined, and by which we moſt frequently fall. Here is a copious matter for examination.

2. When thou doſt examine thyſelf, thou canſt not but remember, how often thou haſt ſinned by wantonneſs, perhaps, or by intemperance; but now thou ſayeſt thou wilt do ſo no more. If thou hadſt never ſaid ſo, and failed, it might have been likely enough; but the Sun does not riſe and ſet ſo often, as thou haſt ſinned and broken all thy holy vows; and thy reſolution to put away thy ſin, is but like *Amnon* thruſting out his Siſter, after he had enjoyed her and was weary: Sin looks ugly after it hath been handled; and thou having loſt thy innocence and thy peace for nothing, but the exchange of ſhame and indignation, thou art vexed, peeviſh, and unſatisfied, and then thou reſolveſt thou wilt ſin no more. But thou wilt find this to be no *great matter*, but a *great deception;* for thou only deſireſt it not, becauſe for the preſent the appetite is gone, thou haſt no fondneſs for it, becauſe the pleaſure is gone; and like him who having ſcratched the ſkin till the blood comes, to ſatisfy a diſeaſe of pleaſure and uncleanneſs, feeling the ſmart, thou reſolveſt to ſcratch no more.

3. But conſider I pray and examine better; is the diſeaſe cured becauſe the ſkin is broken? will the appetite return no more? and canſt not thou

again be tempted? Is it not likely that the ſin will look prettily, and talk flattering words, and entice thee with ſoftneſſes and eaſy fallacies? and wilt not thou then lay thy fooliſh head upon the lap of the *Philiſtian* Damſel, and ſleep till thy locks be cut, and all thy ſtrength is gone? wilt not thou forget thy ſhame and thy repentance, thy ſick ſtomach, and thy aching head, thy troubled conſcience, and thy holy vows, when thy friend calls thee to go and ſin with him, to walk aſide with him in the regions of fooliſh mirth, and an unperceived death? Place thyſelf by Conſideration and imaginative Repreſentment in the circumſtances of thy former temptation; and conſider when thou canſt be made to deſire, and art invited to deſire, and naturally doſt deſire, can thy reſolution hold out againſt ſuch a battery?

4. In order to this, examine whether there be in thee any good principle ſtronger than all the arguments and flatteries of thy ſin; but above all things, examine whether there be not in thee this principle, *That if thou doſt ſin again in great temptation, that thou wilt and mayeſt repent again:* Take heed of that, for it is certain, no man lives in the Regions of Temptation, to whom ſin can ſeem pleaſant, but he will fall when the temptation comes ſtrongly, if he have this principle within him, that though he do commit that ſin, he may and will repent; for then ſin hath got a paranymph and a ſolicitor, a warrant and an advocate; if you think that you can ſo order it, that you ſhall be as ſure of heaven though you do this ſin as though

you do it not, you can have no ſecurity; your reſolutions are but glaſs; they may look like Diamonds to an undiſcerning eye; but they will laſt no longer than till the next rude temptation falls upon them.

5. Examine yet farther: is your caſe ſo, that you have no reſerves of caſes in which your ſin ſhall prevail? you reſolve to leave the partner of your follies, and you go from her leſt you be tempted? it is well, it is very well: but is not your heart falſe as water; and if you ſhould ſee her again, do not you perceive that your reſolution hath brought you to a little ſhame, becauſe it will upbraid thy falſehood and inconſtancy? you reſolve againſt all intemperate Anger, and you deny the importunity of many trifling occurrences: but conſider, if you be provoked, and if you be deſpiſed, can your fleſh and blood endure it then? It may be *Calpurnius* and *Tocca* ſhall not perſuade thee to go to the Baths of *Lucrinus;* but if *Mecænas* calls thee, or the Conſul deſires thy company, thou canſt reſiſt no longer. Thou didſt play the fool with poor *Calenia*, and thou art troubled at thy folly, and art aſhamed when thou doſt remember, how often thou wenteſt into the *Summenium*, and peeped into the Titles of thoſe unhappy Women, whoſe Bodies were the price of a *Roman* penny; but art thou ſo ſevere and chaſte that thou wilt die rather than ſerve the imperious luſt of *Julia?* or wilt thou never be ſcorched with the flames of *Corinna's* Beauty? It is nothing to deſpiſe a cheap ſin and a common temptation; but art thou ſtrong enough

to overcome the ſtrongeſt Argument that thy ſin hath? Examine thyſelf here wiſely and ſeverely. It is not thy part ſaying, I will ſin no more. He that hath new dined, can eaſily reſolve to faſt at Night; but when thou art hungry and invited, and there is rare Meat on the Table, and thy company ſtays for thee, and importunes thee, canſt thou then go on with thy faſting day? if thou canſt, it is as it ſhould be; but let not thy reſolution be judged by ſhort ſayings, but firſt by great conſiderations, and then by proportionable events. If neither the biggeſt temptation, nor thy trifling hopes, nor thy fooliſh principles, nor weak propoſitions can betray thee, then thou mayeſt with reaſon ſay, that you have no affection ſo ſtrong as the love of God, no paſſion ſo great as thy repentance, no pleaſure equal to that of an holy conſcience, and then thou mayeſt reaſonably believe that there is in thee no affection to ſin remaining: but ſomething more is to be added.

6. In the examination of this particular, take no accounts of yourſelf by the preſent circumſtances, and by your thoughts and reſolutions in the days of Religion and Solemnity, but examine how it is with you in the days of ordinary Converſation, and in the circumſtances of ſecular Employments. For it is with us in our preparations to the Holy Communion, as it is with Women that ſit to have their Pictures drawn, they make themſelves brave and adorned, and put on circumſtances of Beauty, to repreſent themſelves to their Friends and to their Poſterity, with all the advantages of Art and Dreſſ-

ing. But he that loves his Friend's Picture, becauſe it is like her, and deſires to ſee in Image what he had in daily Converſation, would willingly ſee her in Picture as he ſees her every day, and that is moſt like her, not which reſembles her in extraordinary, and by the Sophiſtry of dreſſing, but as ſhe looked when ſhe went about in the Government of her Family; ſo muſt we look upon ourſelves in the dreſſes of every day in the Week, and not take account of ourſelves, as we trick up our Souls againſt a Communion-day. For he that puts on fine Clothes for one day or two, muſt not ſuppoſe himſelf to be that Prince which he only perſonates. We dreſs our ſelves upon a day of Religion, and then we cannot endure to think on ſin; and if we do, we ſigh; and when we ſigh, we pray: and ſuppoſe that if we might die upon that day, it would be a good day's work, for we could not die in a better time. But let us not deceive ourſelves. That is our Picture that is like us every day in the Week; and if you are as juſt in your buying and ſelling, as you are when you are ſaying your Prayers; if you are as chaſte in your Converſation, as you are in your religious retirement; if your temperance be the ſame every day, as it is in your thoughts upon a Faſting-day; if you wear the ſame Habits of Virtue every day in the Week, as you put on upon a Communion-day; you have more reaſon to think yourſelves prepared, than by all the *extempore* Piety and ſolemn Religion that riſes at the ſound of a Bell, and keeps her time by the Calendar of the Church, more than by the Laws of God.

This is not ſo to be underſtood, as if it were not fit, that againſt a Solemn Time, and againſt a Communion-day, our Souls ſhould be more adorned, and our Lamps better dreſſed, and our Lights ſnuffed, and our Religion more active, and the habits of Grace ſhould exerciſe more Acts: But this is meant only, that though the Acts of Virtue are not ſo frequent on ordinary days, yet there muſt be no Act of Vice upon them at all; and the Habits of Grace muſt be the ſame, and the Inclinations regular, and the diſpoſitions ready, and the deſires preſſed; and you ſhall better know the eſtate of your Soul, by examining how you converſe with your Merchant, than by conſidering how cautiouſly you converſe with your Prieſt. He that talks to a Prince, will talk as wiſely as he can; but if you will know what the man is, enquire after him in his Houſe, and how he is with all his Relations. For no man ſtands upon his Guard always, as he does ſometimes. If, therefore, upon examining you would underſtand what you are, examine your ſelf, not by your Clothes, but by your Body; not by the Extraordinaries of a Solemn Religion, but by the Ordinaries of a daily Converſation.

*Theſe are the beſt Signs I can tell of; but they are to be made uſe of with the following Cautions.*

1. Although in trying whether your reſolutions are likely to hold, and your affections to ſin are gone, you muſt not rely upon words, but place your-ſelf in the ſcene and circumſtances of your tempta-

tion, and try whether you be likely to hold out, when ſin comes with all the offers of advantage; yet be careful that this examination of your own ſtrength againſt temptation, become not a temptation to you; and this is eſpecially to be attended to in the matter of luſt and fear.

For the very imaginations of a luſtful Object are of themſelves a direct temptation; and he that dreſſes his fancy with remembrances of this vanity, opens a door to let the ſin in. *Murenia's* little Boy being afraid of the Wolf at the door, opened the door to ſee if he were gone, and let the Beaſt in; and ſince the fancy is the proper ſcene of luſt, he that brings the temptation there, brings it where it can beſt prevail. Therefore in our examination concerning this evil, and whether we be likely to ſtand in this War, we are to examine ourſelves only, whether we are perfectly reſolved to fly and not to fight: that is, whether we will ſecure ourſelves by the proper arts of the Spirit of prudence; for if anything can make us come near this Devil, we are loſt without remedy.

The temptations in the matter of fear are ſomething like it, if you will examine whether you love God ſo well that you would die for him, enquire as well and wiſely as you can, but be not too particular. Satisfy yourſelf with a general anſwer, and reſt in this, if you find that the apprehenſion of death is not ſo great as the apprehenſion of ſin; if you pray againſt fear, and heap up Arguments to confirm your courage and your hope, if you find that you deſpiſe thoſe inſtances of perſecution that

you meet with; for the reſt, believe in God, who it may be will not give ſtrengths before you need them; and therefore be ſatisfied with thus much, that your preſent ſtrength is ſufficient for any preſent trial; and when a greater comes, God hath promiſed to give you more ſtrength, when you ſhall have need of more. But examine yourſelf by what is likely to fall upon you actually. It may be you have cauſe to fear that you ſhall be made poor for a good Conſcience, or impriſoned for your duty, or baniſhed for Religion; conſider if you love God ſo well that you are likely to ſuffer that, which is likely to happen to you, but do not dreſs your examination with rare contingencies and unlikely accidents, and impoſſible caſes. Do not aſk yourſelf, whether you would endure the Rack for God, or the application of burning Baſons to the eyes, or the torment of a ſlow fire, or whether you had rather go to Hell than commit a ſin, this is too fantaſtical a Trial; and when God (it may be) knowing your weakneſs, will never put you to it really, do you not tempt yourſelf by fancy, and an afflictive repreſentment.

*Domitian* was a cruel man, falſe and bloody; and to be near him, was a perpetual danger, enough to try the conſtancy of the braveſt *Roman*. But once that he might be wanton in his cruelty, he invited the chiefeſt of the *Patricii* to Supper, who coming in obedience and fear enough, entered into a Court all hanged with Blacks, and from thence were conducted into Dining-rooms by the *Polinctors*, who uſed to dreſs the Bodies unto Funerals:

the Lights of Heaven (we may ſuppoſe) were quite ſhut out by the approaching Night and arts of obſcurity; when they were in thoſe Charnel-houſes (for ſo they ſeemed) every one was placed in order, a black Pillar or Coffin ſet by him, and in it a dim Taper beſmeared with Brimſtone, that it might burn faint, and blue, and ſolemn; where when they had ſtood a while, like deſigned Sacrifices, or as if the Prince were ſending them on ſolemn Embaſſy to his Brother the Prince of Darkneſs; on a ſudden entered ſo many naked Black-Moors, or Children beſmeared with the horrid Juice of the *Sepia*, who having danced a little in fantaſtic and Devils' poſtures, retired a while, and then returned ſerving up a Banquet as at ſolemn Funerals, and Wine brought to them in Urns inſtead of Goblets; with deepeſt ſilence, now and then interrupted with fearful groans and ſhriekings. Here the Senators, who poſſibly could have ſtruggled with the abſtracted thoughts of Death, ſeeing it dreſſed in all the fearful Imagery and Ceremonies of the Grave, had no Powers of Philoſophy or Roman Courage; but falling into a *Lipothymy*, or deep ſwooning, made up this Pageantry of Death, with a repreſenting of it unto the Life. This Scene of Sorrows was over-acted, and it was a witty Cruelty to kill a wiſe man, by making him too imaginative and fantaſtical. It is not good to break a Staff by too much trying the ſtrength of it, or to undo a man's Soul by a uſeleſs and ſo fantaſtic a Temptation. For he that tries himſelf further than he hath need of, is like *Palæmon's* Shepherd, who

fearing the foot-bridge was not ſtrong enough, to try it, loaded it ſo long, till by his unequal Trial, he broke that which would have borne a bigger burden than he had to carry over it. *Some things will better ſuffer a long uſage, than an unequal trial.*

2. When any man hath by the former meaſures examined himſelf, how his Affections do ſtand to ſin and folly, by whatſoever Signs he is uſually made confident, let him be ſure to make abatements of his Confidence, if he hath found that he hath failed already, in deſpite of all his Arts, and all his Purpoſes. If we have often fallen back from our reſolutions, there is then no Sign left for us, but the thing ſignified; nothing can tell us how our affections are, but by obſerving what they do. For he that hath broken his word with me, when it was in his power to keep it, hath deſtroyed my confidence in him; but if he hath deceived me twice or thrice in the ſame thing, for ſhame and prudence ſake I will venture no more, if I can be diſobliged: If we therefore have failed of our promiſes to God ſo many times, that we can ſpeak nothing reaſonably of our proceedings, nor imagine what thoughts God hath concerning us, but the hardeſt and the worſt; though we have great reaſon to rejoice in God's long-ſuffering and infinite patience, yet by any Signs which can be given, we have no reaſon to truſt ourſelves.

For if we ſhall now examine, we can tell no more than we could do before; we were always deceived in our conjectures and pretences, and it is more likely now, becauſe ſin hath ſo long prevailed;

and by our frequent Relapſes, we muſt at leaſt learn this truth, That our hearts are falſe, and our promiſes are not to be truſted. In this caſe, no teſtimony is credible but an eye-witneſs: Therefore let us leave all artificial Examinations, and betake ourſelves to the ſolid and material practices of a Religious Life. We muſt do ſomething really, before we can by inquiring tell how it is with us. When we have reſolved, and in ſome meaſure performed our reſolution; when we have ſtood the ſhock of a temptation, and found our heart firm as in a day of Religion; when we perceive ſin to be weaker, and the Kingdom of Grace to grow in power; when we feel that all our holy Vows are more than Words, and that we are not the ſame eaſy Fools, always giving God good words, but never performing them; but that now we have ſet foot upon the Enemy, and are not infallibly carried away, when our temptation comes, then we may inquire further, and look after the former Signs and Indications of Spiritual Life, and the juſt meaſures of preparation. Till then let us not trouble ourſelves with the particulars of Spiritual Arts, and the artificial Methods of Religion; for things are not ſo well with us as we ſuppoſe.

## Section IV.—*Of Examination of ourſelves in the Matter of our Prayers in order to a Holy Communion.*

THE Holy Sacrament is in its nature and deſign a Solemn Prayer, and the imitation of the interceſſion which our glorious High Prieſt continually makes for us in Heaven; and as it is our Miniſtry, and contains our Duty, it is nothing elſe but the Solemnity and great Economy of Prayer, for the whole, and for every Member, and for all and every particular neceſſity of the Church; and all the whole Conjugation of Offices and Union of Hearts, and Conjunction of Miniſters, is nothing but the advantages and ſolemnity, and ſanctification of Prayer; and therefore in order to do this work *in Solemnity*, as we ought, it were very fit that we examine ourſelves how we do it in ordinary and daily Offices.

For ſince there are ſo many excellent Promiſes made to Prayer, and that nothing more diſpoſes us to receive the Grace of the Sacraments, and the Bleſſings of Communion, than holy Prayer; ſince Prayer can obtain every thing, it can open the Windows of Heaven, and ſhut the Gates of Hell; it can put a holy conſtraint upon God, and detain an Angel till he leave a Bleſſing; it can open the Treaſures of Rain, and ſoften the Iron Ribs of Rocks, till they melt into Tears and a flowing

River: Prayer can unclaſp the Girdles of the North, ſaying to a Mountain of Ice, Be thou removed hence, and caſt into the bottom of the Sea; it can arreſt the Sun in the midſt of his Courſe, and ſend the ſwift-winged Winds upon our Errand; and all thoſe ſtrange things, and ſecret decrees, and unrevealed tranſactions which are above the Clouds, and far beyond the Regions of the Stars, ſhall combine in Miniſtry, and advantages for the praying man: It cannot be but we ſhould feel leſs evil, and much more good than we do, if our Prayers were right. But the ſtate of things is thus: It is an eaſy duty, and there are many promiſes, and we do it often, and yet we prevail but little. Is it not a ſtrange thing that our Friends die round about us, and in every Family ſome great evil often happens, and a Church ſhall ſuffer perſecution for many years together without remedy, and a poor man groans under his Oppreſſor, who is ſtill proſperous, and we cannot reſcue the life of a Servant from his fatal Grave; and ſtill we pray, and do not change the courſe of Providence in a ſingle inſtance many times, whether the inſtance be of little or great concernment. What is the matter? we patiently ſuffer our Prayers to be rejected, and comfort ourſelves by ſaying, that it may be the thing is not fit for us, it is againſt the Decree of God, or againſt our good, or to be denied is better; and there is a ſecret order of things and events, to which a Denial does better miniſter than a Conceſſion. This is very true, but not always when we are denied; for it is not always in Mercy, but in anger very often

we are denied, becauſe our duty is ill performed: For if our Prayers were right, the Providence of God would often find out ways, to reconcile his great ends with our great deſires; and we might be ſaved hereafter, and yet delivered here beſides; and ſometimes we ſhould have Heaven and Proſperity too, and the croſs ſhould be ſweetened, and the days of affliction ſhould for our ſakes be ſhortened, and death would not come ſo haſtily: and yet we ſhould be preſerved innocent in the midſt of an evil Generation, though it waited for the periods and uſual determinations of Nature. Let us rectify our Prayers, and try what the event will be; it is worth ſo much at leaſt: But however, as to the preſent caſe, if we perform this duty pitifully and culpably, it is not to be expected we ſhould communicate holily. The gradation and correſpondences of this holy Miniſtry will demonſtrate this Truth.

For what Chriſt did once upon the Croſs in real Sacrifice, that he always does in Heaven by perpetual Repreſentment and Interceſſion; what Chriſt does by his ſupreme Prieſthood, that the Church doth by her miniſterial; what he does in Heaven, we do upon Earth; what is performed at the right hand of God, is alſo repreſented and in one manner exhibited upon the holy Table of the Lord: and what is done on Altars upon Solemn days, is done in our Cloſets in our daily Offices; that is, God is invocated, and God is appeaſed, and God is reconciled, and God gives us Bleſſings and the Fruits of Chriſt's Paſſion, in the virtue of the ſacrificed Lamb; that is, we believing and

praying, are bleſſed and ſanctified and ſaved through Jeſus Chriſt. So that as we pray, ſo we communicate; if we pray well, we may communicate well, elſe at no hand. Now in this, beſides that we are to take account of our Prayers, by all thoſe meaſures of the Spirit, which we have learned in the holy Scriptures, there are two great lines of Duty, by which we can well examine ourſelves in this particular.

1. That our Prayers muſt be the work of our Hearts, not of our Lips; that is, that we heartily deſire what we ſo carefully pray for: and God knows this is not very ordinary. For beſides that we are not in love with the things of God, and have no worthy value for Religion, there are many things in our Prayer which we aſk for, and do not know what to do with, if we had them; and we do not feel any want of them, and we care not whether we have them or no. We aſk for the Spirit of God, for Wiſdom, and for a right Judgment in all things; and yet there are not many in our Chriſtian Aſſemblies, who uſe to trouble themſelves at all with judging concerning the Myſteries of Godlineſs. Men pray for Humility, and yet at the ſame time think, that all that which is indeed humility, is a pitiful poorneſs of Spirit, puſillanimity, and want of good breeding. We pray for a contrition and a broken heart; and yet if we chance to be melancholy, we long to be comforted, and think that the Lectures of the Croſs bring Death, and therefore are not the way of Eternal Life. We pray ſometimes that God may be firſt and laſt in

all our thoughts; and yet we conceive it no great matter whether he be or no; but we are ſure that he is not, but the things of the World do take up the place of God, and yet we hope to be ſaved for all that, and conſequently are very indifferent concerning the return of that Prayer. We frequently call upon God for his Grace, that we may never fall into ſin; now in this, beſides that we have no hopes to be heard, and think it impoſſible to arrive to a ſtate of life in which we ſhall not commit ſins, yet if we do ſin, we know there is a remedy ſo ready, that we believe, we are not much the worſe if we do. Here are Prayers enough, but where are the Deſires all this while? We pray againſt Covetouſneſs, and Pride, and Gluttony; but nothing that we do but is either Covetouſneſs or Pride; ſo that our Prayers are terminated upon a word, not upon a thing. We do covetous actions, and ſpeak proud words, and have high thoughts, and do not paſſionately deſire to have affections contrary to them, but only to ſuch notions of the ſin as we have entertained, which are ſuch as will do no real prejudice or mortification to the ſin: and whatever our Prayers are, yet it is certain our Deſires are ſo little, and ſo content with any thing of this nature, that for very many ſpiritual Petitions, we are indifferent whether they be granted or not.

But if we are poor or perſecuted, if we be in fear or danger, if we be heart-ſick or afflicted with an uncertain Soul, then we are true deſirers of relief and mercy; we long for health, and deſire earneſtly to be ſafe; our hearts are pinched with the deſire,

and the ſharpneſs of the appetite is a pain; then we pray, and mind what we do. He that is in fear of Death, does not, when he prays for life, think upon his Money and his Sheep; the entering of a fair Woman into the room does not bend his neck, and make him look off from the Prince's Face of whom he ſues for pardon. And if we had Deſires as ſtrong as our needs, and apprehenſions anſwerable to our duty, it were not poſſible that a man ſhould ſay his Prayers, and never think of what he ſpeaks: but as our attention is, ſo is our deſire, trifling and impertinent; it is frighted away like a Bird, which fears as much when you come to give it meat, as if you came with a deſign of Death.

When therefore you are to give ſentence concerning your Prayers, your Prayer-book is the leaſt thing that is to be examined, your Deſires are the principal, for they are Fountains both of Action and Paſſion. Deſire what you pray for, for certain it is, you will pray paſſionately if you deſire fervently. *Prayers are but the Body of the Bird; Deſires are its Angels' Wings.*

2. If you will know how it is with you in the matter of your Prayers, examine whether or no the Form of your Prayer be the Rule of your Life. Every Petition to God is a Precept to man; and when in your Litanies you pray to be delivered from Malice and Hypocriſy, from Pride and Envy, from Fornication and every deadly Sin; all that is but a Line of Duty, and tells us that we muſt never conſent to an act of Pride, or a thought of

Envy, to a temptation of Uncleanneſs, or the beſmearings and evil paintings of Hypocriſy. But we, when we pray againſt a ſin, think we have done enough, and if we aſk for a Grace, ſuppoſe there is no more required. Now Prayer is an inſtrument of help, a procuring auxiliaries of God, that we may do our duty; and why ſhould we aſk for help, if we be not ourſelves bound to do the thing? Look not therefore upon your Prayers, as a ſhort method of eaſe and Salvation, but as a perpetual Monition of duty; and by what we require of God, we ſee what he requires of us; and if you want a Syſtem or collective Body of holy Precepts, you need no more but your Prayer-book; and if you look upon them firſt as Duties, then as Prayers, that is, things fit to be deſired, and fit to be laboured for, your Prayers will be much more uſeful; not ſo often vain, not ſo ſubject to illuſion, not ſo deſtitute of effect, or ſo failing of the Promiſes. The Prayers of a Chriſtian muſt be like the Devotions of the Huſbandman, God ſpeed the Plough, that is, Labour and Prayer together; a Prayer to bleſs our Labour. Thus then we muſt examine;

Is deſire the meaſure of our Prayer? and is Labour the Fruit of our Deſire? if ſo, then what we aſk we ſhall receive as the gift of God, and the reward of our Labour; but unleſs this be the ſtate of our Prayer, we ſhall find that the receiving of the Sacrament will be as ineffective, becauſe it will be as imperfect as our Prayer. For Prayer and Communion differ but as *great* and *little* in the ſame kind of duty. Communion is but a great, public, and ſolemn Addreſs and Prayer to God

through Jeſus Chriſt: and if we be not faithful in a little, we ſhall not be intruſted in a greater; he that does not pray holily and proſperouſly, can never communicate acceptably. This therefore muſt be ſeverely and prudently examined.

But let us remember this, that there is nothing fit to be preſented to God, but what is great and excellent; for nothing comes from him, but what is great and beſt, and nothing ſhould be returned to him, that is little and contemptible in its kind. It is a myſterious Elegancy that is in the Hebrew of the Old Teſtament; when the Spirit of God would call any thing very great, or very excellent, he calls it [of the Lord;] ſo *the affrightment of the Lord;* that is a great affrightment fell upon them; and the fearful fire that fell upon the Shepherds and Sheep of *Job*, is called the *fire of God;* and when *David* took the Spear and Water-pot from the Head of *Saul*, while he and his Guards were ſleeping, it is ſaid, that *the ſleep of the Lord*, that is, a very great ſleep was fallen upon them. Thus we read of the *Flames* of God, and a *Land of Darkneſs of God*, that is, vehement flames, and a Land of exceeding darkneſs: and the reaſon is, becauſe when God ſtrikes, he ſtrikes vehemently; ſo that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God: And on the other ſide, when he bleſſes, he bleſſes excellently; and therefore when *Naomi* bleſſed *Boaz*, ſhe ſaid, *Let him be bleſſed of the Lord*, that is, according to the Hebrew manner of ſpeaking, Let him be exceedingly bleſſed. In proportion to all this, whatſoever is offered to God, ſhould be of the beſt; it ſhould be a devout Prayer,

a fervent, humble, paſſionate Supplication. He that prays otherwiſe, muſt expect the curſes and contempt of Lukewarmneſs, and will be infinitely unworthy to come to the holy Communion, whither they that come intend to preſent their Prayers to God in the Union of Chriſt's Interceſſion, which is then ſolemnly imitated and repreſented. An indevout Prayer can never be joined with Chriſt's Prayers. Fire will eaſily combine with fire, and flame marries flame; but a cold Devotion and the fire of this Altar, can never be friendly and unite in one Pyramid, to aſcend together to the Regions of God, and the Element of Love. If it be a *Prayer of God*, that is, fit to be intitled, fit to be preſented unto him, it muſt be moſt vehement and holy. *The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous man*, only can be confident to prevail; nothing elſe can ever be ſanctified by a conjunction with this Sacrifice of Prayer, which muſt be conſumed by a heavenly fire. There is not indeed any greater indication of our worthineſs or unworthineſs to receive the holy Communion, than to examine and underſtand the ſtate of our daily Prayer.

## Section V.—*Of Preparatory Examination of ourſelves in ſome other Inſtances.*

He that comes to the holy Communion, muſt examine himſelf concerning his Paſſions; whether that which uſually tranſports him to indecency and ſhame, to ſin and

folly, be brought under the Dominion of Grace, under the Command of Reaſon, under the Empire of the Spirit. For the Paſſions of the Soul are the violences and ſtorms of Reaſon; neither Reaſon nor Grace can be heard to ſpeak when they are loud; and in vain it is that you tell a paſſionate Perſon of the Intereſts of Wiſdom and Religion. We ſee it in Fools, who have no allay of reaſon; their anger is rage, their jealouſy is madneſs, their deſires are ravenous, their loves are troubleſome and unſeaſonable, their hopes are groundleſs, but ever confident, their fears are by chance, but always without meaſure: and a Fool when his belly is full, may as ſoon be perſuaded into temperate Diſcourſes, as he that is paſſionate, to be obedient to God, and to the Rules of his own Felicity.

A great Fear and a conſtant Virtue are ſeldom found in one man; and a Coward is virtuous by chance, and ſo long as he is let alone; but unleſs the fear of God be greater than the fear of man, it is in the power of his Enemy whether that man ſhall be happy or wiſe. And ſo it is in a great or eaſy anger; every man and every thing can put a peeviſh Perſon out of his Religion. It cannot in theſe and all the like caſes be well, unleſs by examining we find that our Spirit is more meek, our Paſſion eaſier overcome, and the Paroxyſms or Fits return leſs frequently, and the Symptoms be leſs malignant. In this inſtance we muſt be quick and ſevere; and begin betimes to take a courſe with theſe Vermin and Vipers of the Soul. *Suetonius* tells, that when the witty Flatterers of *Cæſar*

had obſerved that no Frogs did breed in his Grandfather's *Villa*, which was in the Suburbs of *Rome*, they ſet themſelves to invent a Reaſon which ſhould flatter the Prince, and boldly told abroad, that when young *Octavius* was a Child, he once in ſport forbad them to make a noiſe, and for ever after they were ſilent and left their Pools; ever ſince *Octavius* began to ſpeak, they left off to make their noiſes and their dwellings there. If we ſuppreſs our Paſſions that make inarticulate noiſes in the Soul, if betimes and in their infancy we make them ſilent, we ſhall find peace in all our days. But an old paſſion, an inveterate peeviſhneſs, an habitual impotency of luſt and vile deſires, are like an old Lion; he will by no means be made tame, and taught to eat the meat of Peace and Gentleneſs.

If thy Paſſion be laſting and violent, thou art in a ſtate of evil: if it be ſudden and frequent, tranſient and volatile, thou wilt often fall into ſin; and though every Paſſion be not a ſin, yet every Exceſs of paſſion is a diminution of Reaſon and Religion; and when the acts are ſo frequent that none can number them, what effects they leave behind, and how much they diſorder the ſtate of Grace, none can tell. Either therefore ſuffer no paſſion to tranſport and govern you, or no examination can ſignify any thing. For *no man can ſay that a very paſſionate man, is a very good man;* or how much he is beloved of God, who plays the fool ſo frequently; nor how long God will love him, who is at the mercy of his imperious paſſion, which gives him Laws, and can every day change his ſtate from good

to bad. It was well ſaid of one, If you give the Reins to Grief, every thing that croſſes thee can produce biggeſt grief; and the cauſes of paſſions, are as they are made within. He that checks at every word, and is jealous of every look, and diſturbed at every accident, and takes all things by the wrong handle, and reflects upon all diſturbances, ſwitches and ſpurs his paſſion, and ſtrives to overtake ſin, and to be tied unto infelicity; but nothing can ſecure our Religion, but binding our paſſions in chains, and doubling our guards upon them, leſt like mad folks they break their locks and bolts, and do all the miſchief which they can, when they have inſtruments and opportunity.

*Concerning ſome ſort of paſſionate Perſons, it may be truly ſaid, that they are very unfit to communicate, but that they are fit, it can be confidently ſaid of none.*

*Here therefore let us thus examine ourſelves.*

Are your Deſires unreaſonable, paſſionate, impotent and tranſporting? If God refuſes to give you what you deſire, can you lay your head ſoftly down upon the lap of Providence, and reſt content without it? Do you thankfully receive what he gives, and when he gives you not what you covet, can you ſtill confeſs his goodneſs, and glorify his Will and Wiſdom, without any amazement, diſſatisfaction, or ſecret murmurs? Can you be at peace within, when your purpoſes are defeated; and at peace abroad with him that ſtands in the way be-

tween you and your deſires? And how is it with you in your Angers? Does it laſt ſo long, or return ſo frequently as before? Have you the ſame Malice, or have you the ſame Peeviſhneſs? For one long anger, and twenty ſhort ones, have no very great difference, ſave only, that in ſhort and ſudden angers we are ſurpriſed, and not ſo in the other: but it is an intolerable thing always to be ſurprized, and a thouſand times to ſay, I was not aware, or I was miſtaken. But let us without excuſes examine ourſelves in this matter, for this is the great Magazine of Virtue or Vice; here dwells Obedience or Licentiouſneſs, a cloſe knot, or an open liberty, little pleaſures and great diſturbances, loſs of time, and breach of vows. But if that we may come to Chriſt, we have ſtopped ſo many Avenues of ſin, and Fountains of temptation, it may be very well; but without it, it can never.

2. He that comes to the holy Communion, muſt examine himſelf, whether his luſts be mortified, or whether they be only changed. For many times we have ſeeming peace, when our open Enemies are changed into falſe Friends: and we think ourſelves holy Perſons, becauſe we are quit of carnal crimes, and yet in exchange for them, we are dying with ſpiritual. It is an eaſy thing to reprove a Murderer, and to chide a fooliſh Drunkard, to make a Liar Bluſh, and a Thief to run away. But you may be ſecretly proud, when no man ſhall dare to tell you ſo; and to have a ſecret Envy, and yet to keep company with the beſt and moſt religious Perſons. A little Examination will

ſerve your turn to know whether you have committed Adultery, or be a Swearer; but to know whether your intentions be holy, whether you love the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God; whether religious or ſecular intereſt be the dearer; whether there be any hypocriſy or ſecret malice in your heart, hath ſomething of more ſecret conſideration. Do not you ſometimes ſecretly rejoice in the diminution or diſparagement of your Brother? Do not you tell his ſad and ſhameful Story with ſome pleaſure? Are you not quick in telling it, and willing enough it ſhould be believed? Would you not fain have him leſs than yourſelf, not ſo eminent, not ſo well eſteemed, and therefore do not you love to tell a true Story of him, that is not ſo very much for his commendation?

Theſe things muſt be examined, not that it can be thought that a man muſt be without fault when he comes, but that he muſt cheriſh none, he muſt leave none unexamined, he muſt diſcover as much as he can, and crucify all that he can diſcover. He that hath mortified his carnal Appetite, and is proud of his Conqueſt; or prays often, and reproaches him that does not; and gives Alms, and ſecretly undervalues him that cannot; or is of a right opinion, but curſes him that is of the wrong; or leaveth his ambitious purſuits and vain-glorious purpoſes, but ſits at home and is idle, is like a man who ſtands by a fire in a wide and a cold Room; he ſcorches on one ſide, and freezes on the other; whereas the habits of virtue are like a great mantle, and the man is warm, and well all over.

But it is an ill cure for the Ague, to fall into a Fever, or to be eaſed of ſore eyes by a diverſion of the Rheum upon the Lungs; and that Soul that turns her back upon one ſin, and her face to another, is (it may be) weary of the Inſtance, but not of the Iniquity: and rolling upon an uneaſy bed of thorns, chooſes only to be tormented in another part: but finding the ſame ſenſe there, becauſe the part is informed by the ſame Spirit, and no difference between the thorn in the ſide, and the thorn in the hand, perceives herſelf miſerable and encircled with calamity. But when from carnal crimes, which bring ſhame, a man falls into ſpiritual crimes, which moſt men let alone; from thoſe ſins which every thing can reprove to a ſecret venom and an undiſcerned ulcer; a man may come to the Communion, and the holy man that miniſters cannot reject him; but he cauſes no joy before the Angels; and becauſe he does not examine wiſely, and judge ſeverely, he is diſcerned by God, and ſhall be judged, when to be *judged*, means all one with *being condemned*.

3. When we examine ourſelves in order to receiving of the bleſſed Sacrament, we muſt be careful that we do not limit our examination; and confine it to the time ſince our laſt receiving. For ſome Perſons who think themſelves ſpiritual, uſually examine how they have comported themſelves ſince the laſt Communion only, and accordingly make judgment upon themſelves; and theſe men poſſibly may do well enough, if they be of the number of them, of whom our bleſſed Saviour

affirms, that they need no repentance, that is, no change of life, no enquiry but into the meaſures of Progreſſion. But there are but few who live at that rate, and they that do, it may be, have not that confidence. But to them and all men elſe, it were ſafe advice, that the enquiry how they have lived ſince the laſt Communion, ſhould be but one part of their examination.

1. Becauſe they who ſo limit their enquiries, muſt needs ſuppoſe, that till then all was well, and that then they communicated worthily; and conſequently, that all the whole work and Economy of Salvation was then performed; every one of which ſuppoſals hath an uncertain Truth; but a very certain Danger.

2. They who ſo limit their examination, ſuppoſe that at every Communion they begin the World anew; whereas our future life is to be a progreſſion upon the old ſtock, and judgment is to be made of this that comes after, by that which went before; and therefore theſe limited examinations muſt needs be of leſs uſe and purpoſe. True it is, that at every Communion we are to begin a new life; and ſo we ought every day; that is, we ought to be as zealous, and as penitent, as reſolute and affectionate, as if we never had begun before; we ought ſo to ſuſpect the imperfection of what is paſt, that we are to look upon ourſelves but as new Beginners; that by apprehending the ſame neceſſity, we may have the ſame paſſion, the ſame fervour and holy fires. But in this matter of examining, we muſt conſider how much hath been

pardoned, that we may examine how thankful we have been, and what returns we have made: we muſt obſerve all our uſual failings, that we may now ſet our Guards accordingly: we muſt remember in what weak part we are ſmitten, that we may ſtill pray againſt it; and we muſt renew our ſad remembrances, that we may continue our ſad repentances, and we muſt look upon our whole life, that we may be truly humbled. He that only examines how it is with him ſince the laſt Communion, will think too well of himſelf, if he ſpies his Bills of Accumulation to be ſmall; but every man will find cauſe enough to hide his face in the duſt, and to come with fear and trembling, when he views the ſum total of his life, which certainly will appear to be full of ſhame and diſhonour.

3. We are not to limit our examination to the interval ſince the laſt Communion, becauſe much of our preſent duty is relative to the firſt parts of our life. For all the former Vows of Obedience, though we have broken them a thouſand times, yet have ſtill an obliging power; and there are many contingencies of our life which require peculiar Uſages and Treatments of ourſelves, and there are many follies which we leave by degrees, and many obligations which are of continual duty; and it may be that our paſſion did once carry us to ſo extreme, ſo intolerable a violence, perhaps twenty years ago, that we are ſtill to keep our fears and tremblings about us, leſt the ſame principle produce the ſame evil event. When *Horatius Cocles* had won that glorious victory over the three *Sabine*

Brothers, and entering gloriouſly into *Rome*, eſpied his Siſter wetting his Laurel with her unſeaſonable tears, for the death of one of them whom ſhe loved, with the honour of a Wife, and the paſſion of a Lover; he, being mad with rage and pride, becauſe her ſorrow allayed his Joys and Glory, killed her with that ſword by which her Servant died: Sometimes paſſion makes a prodigious excurſion, and paſſes on to the greateſt violence, and the moſt prodigious follies: and though it be uſually ſo reſtrained by Reaſon and Religion, that ſuch Tranſvolutions are not frequent; yet one ſuch Act is an eternal Teſtimony how weak we are, and how miſchievous a paſſion can be. It is a Miracle of Providence, that in the midſt of all the rudeneſſes and accidents of the World, a man preſerves his eyes, which every thing can extinguiſh and put out; and it is no leſs a Miracle of Grace, that in the midſt of ſo many diſhonourable Loves, there are no more horrid Tragedies: and ſo many bruiſh Angers, do not produce more cruel ſudden Murders; and that ſo much Envy does not oftener break out into open Hoſtilities: it is indeed a mighty Grace that pares the nails of theſe wild Beaſts, and makes them more innocent in their effects, than they are in their nature; but ſtill the principle remains; there is in us the ſame evil nature, and the ſame unruly paſſion; and therefore as there ought to be continual guards upon them, ſo there muſt be continual enquiries made concerning them; and every thing is to be examined, leſt all be loſt upon a ſudden.

4. We muſt not limit our Examination to the interval to the laſt Communion, becauſe our firſt repentances muſt ſtill proceed, and muſt never be at an end. For no man was ſo pardoned at the laſt Communion, but that he is ſtill obliged to beg pardon for thoſe ſins he then repented of. He muſt always repent, and always pray, and never be at peace with the firſt ſins of his youth; and the ſorrows of the firſt day muſt be the duty of every day; and that Examination muſt come into this account; and when we enquire after our own ſtate, we muſt not view the little finger, but the whole man. For in all the Foreſt the Ape is the handſomeſt Beaſt, ſo long as he ſhews nothing but his hand; but when the enquiring and envious Beaſts looked round about them, they quickly eſpied a foul deformity.

There are in the ſtate of a man's Soul ſome good Proportions, and ſome well days, and ſome fortunate periods; but he that is contented with beholding them alone, cares more to pleaſe himſelf than to pleaſe God, and thinks him to be happy whom man, not whom God approves. By this way twenty deceptions and impoſtures may abuſe a man. See therefore what you are from head to foot, from the beginning to the end, from the firſt entry to your laſt progreſſion: and although it be not neceſſary that we always actually conſider all; yet it will be neceſſary that we always truly know it all, that our relative duties, and our imperfect actions, and our collateral obligations, and the direct meaſures of the increaſe of Grace, may be juſtly diſcerned and underſtood.

5. He that examines himſelf, and would make right judgment of his ſtate and of his duty, muſt not do it by ſingle actions, but by ſtates of life and habits of Religion. If we can ſay truly, that neither Proſperity nor Adverſity, neither Croſs nor Crown, Employment nor Retirement, public Offices nor houſehold Cares do diſorder us in our duty to God and our Relations, that is, if we ſafely and wiſely paſſed through, or converſe in any one of theſe ſtates of life, it is very likely that things are well with us. But the conſideration of ſingle actions will do but little. Some Acts of Charity, and many Prayers, and the doing one noble action, or being once or twice very bountiful, or the ſtruggling with one danger, and the ſpeaking for God in one conteſtation; theſe are excellent things, and good ſignifications of life, but not always of health and ſtrength, not of a ſtate of Grace. Now becauſe in the holy Communion we are growing up to the meaſures of the fulneſs of Chriſt, we can no otherwiſe be fitted to it, but by the Progreſſions and Increaſe of a man, that is, by habits of Grace, and ſtates, and permanences of Religion; and therefore our Examinations muſt be accordingly.

## Section VI.—*Devotions to be uſed upon the Days of our Examination, relative to that Duty.*

### The Hymn.

THE Lord is in his holy Temple, the Lord's Throne is in Heaven: his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the Children of men.

The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence, his Soul hateth.

For the righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs; his countenance doth behold the upright.

The Words of the Lord are pure Words: as Silver tried in a Furnace of Earth, purified ſeven times.

Thou haſt proved mine heart, thou haſt viſited me in the night, thou haſt tried me and ſhalt find nothing: I am purpoſed that my mouth ſhall not tranſgreſs.

Hold up my goings in thy paths: that my foot-ſteps ſlide not.

As for God, his Way is perfect: the Word of the Lord is tried; he is a Buckler to all thoſe that truſt in him.

For who is God ſave the Lord? and who is our Rock ſave our God?

Judge me, O Lord; for I have walked in mine Integrity: but I truſt in the Lord, therefore I ſhall not ſlide.

Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my Reins and my Heart : for thy loving kindneſs is before mine eyes, and I will walk in thy Truth.

I will not ſit with vain Perſons : neither will I go in with Diſſemblers.

I hate the Congregation of evil doers : and will not ſit with the wicked.

I will waſh my hands in Innocency : ſo will I compaſs thine Altar, O Lord.

That I may publiſh with the voice of thankſgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous Works.

But as for me, I will walk in my integrity : redeem me, and be merciful to me.

So ſhall my foot ſtand in an even place : and in the Congregation will I bleſs the Lord.

*Glory be to the Father*, &c.
*As it was in the beginning*, &c.

## The Prayers.

*O Eternal and moſt Glorious God, who ſitteſt in Heaven ruling over all things from the beginning; thou dwelleſt on high, and yet humbleſt thyſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and Earth; thou haſt ſearched me, O Lord, and known me; thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off, and art acquainted with all my ways, for there is not a word in my tongue, but thou, O Lord, knoweſt it altogether: Be pleaſed to impart unto thy ſervant a Ray of thy heavenly Light, a Beam of the Sun of Righteouſneſs; open mine eyes, that I may ſee the wondrous things of thy Law, that I may*

*walk in them all my days: Set all my ſins before my face, that I may ſpeedily and earneſtly and perfectly repent and forſake them all: Give me a ſight of my infirmities, that I may watch againſt them; diſcover to me all my evil and weak Principles, that I may reform them; and whatſoever is wanting in me, towards the underſtanding of anything whereby I may pleaſe thee and perfect my duty, I beg of thee to reveal that alſo unto me, that my duty may not be undiſcerned, and my Faith may not be reproved, and my affections may not be perverſe, and hardened in their fooliſh purſuance, and a ſecret ſin may not lie undiſcovered and corrupting my Soul.*

II.

*Give me an ingenuous and a ſevere Spirit, that whatever Judgment of Charity I make concerning others, I may give a right judgment concerning my own ſtate and actions, condemning the criminal, cenſuring the ſuſpicious, ſuſpecting what ſeems allowable, and watchful even over the beſt; that I may in the Spirit of repentance and mortification correct all my irregularities, and reform my errors, and improve the good things which thou haſt given me; that endeavouring to approve my Actions to my Conſcience, and my Conſcience to thy Law, I may not be a Reprobate, but approved by thee in the Great Day of Examination of all the World, and be reckoned amongſt thy Elect, the ſecret ones, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Amen.

*A ſhort Form of Humiliation, after our Examination.*

I.

Thy Judgments, O Lord God, are declared in thunder, and with fear and with dread; thou ſhakeſt all my bones, and my Soul trembles, when I conſider that great day in which thou ſhalt judge all the World, and that infinite Juſtice which will not ſpare the Mighty for his Greatneſs, nor the Poor for his Poverty; and thy unlimited power, which can mightily deſtroy all them that will not have thee to reign over them.

II.

O moſt dreadful Judge, I ſtand in amazement when I conſider that the Heavens are not pure in thine eyes, and if thou foundeſt perverſeneſs in thy Angels, and didſt not ſpare them, what ſhall become of me? The Stars fell from Heaven; and what can I preſume, who am but duſt and aſhes? They whoſe life hath ſeemed holy are fallen into an evil portion, and after they have eaten the Bread of Angels, they have been delighted with Carobe-nuts, with huſks and draff of Swine.

III.

There is no holineſs, O God, if thou withdraweſt thy hand; no Wiſdom profits if thy Government does ceaſe. No Courage can abide, no Chaſtity can remain pure, no Watchfulneſs keep us ſafe,

unleſs thou doſt continue to ſtrengthen us, to purify us, to make us ſtand. When thou leaveſt us, we drown and periſh; when thy Grace and Mercy viſit us, we are lifted up and ſtand upright. We are unſtable, and unſecure, unleſs we be confirmed by thee; but we ſeek to thee for thy help; and yet depart from the ways of thy Commandments.

IV.

O how meanly and contemptibly do I deſerve to be thought of! how little and inconſiderable is the good which I do! and how vaſt, how innumerable, how intolerable are the evils which I have done! I ſubmit, O God, I ſubmit to the Abyſſes of thy righteous and unſearchable Judgment; for I have been ſearching for a little, ſome little good in me; but I find nothing. Much indeed of good I have received; but I have abuſed it. Thou haſt given me thy Grace; but I have turned it into wantonneſs: thou haſt enabled me to ſerve thee; but I have ſerved myſelf; but never but when I was thy Enemy; ſo that in me, that is, in my fleſh, dwelleth no good thing.

V.

I am a deep abyſs, O God, of folly and calamity; I have been ſearching my heart, and can find no good thing; I have been ſearching, and I cannot find out all the evil. Thou didſt create in me a hope of Glory, but I have loſt my confidence; and men have ſometimes ſpoken good things of me, but I know not where they are; and who

ſhall raiſe me up, when I fall down before thy face in thy eternal Judgment.

VI.

I will no more deſire, I will no more ſuffer, I will no more ſeek, I will no more be moved by the praiſes of men; for behold they ſpeak, but they know nothing; thou art ſilent, but thou knoweſt all things, and I increaſe the number of my ſins. What ſhall I do, O thou preſerver of men! I will lay my face in the duſt, and confeſs myſelf to be nothing.

VII.

Pity my ſhame, O God; bind up my wounds; lift me up from the duſt; raiſe me up from this nothing, and make me ſomething; what thou wilt, what thou wilt delight in. Take away the partition-wall, the hindrance, the ſin that ſo eaſily beſets me, and bring me unto Jeſus, to my ſweeteſt Saviour Jeſus; unite me unto him; and then although in myſelf I am nothing, yet in him I ſhall be what I ought to be, and what thou canſt not chooſe but love. *Amen, Amen.*

## A Prayer for Holy and Fervent Desires of Religion, and particularly of the Blessed Sacrament.

1.

*O Most Blessed, most glorious Lord and Saviour Jesus; thou that watereſt the Furrows of the Earth, and refreſheſt her wearineſs, and makeſt it very plenteous, behold, O God, my deſert and unfruitful Soul; I have already a parched ground, give me a Land of Rivers of Waters; my Soul is dry, but not thirſty; it hath no water, nor it deſires none; I have been like a dead man to all the deſires of Heaven. I am earneſt and concerned in the things of the World; but very indifferent, or rather not well enduring the ſeverities and Excellencies of Religion. I have not been greedy of thy Word, or longed for thy Sacraments. The worſt of thy Followers came running after thee for Loaves, though they cared not for the Miracle; but thou offereſt me Loaves and Miracles together, and I have cared for neither: Thou offereſt me thyſelf, and all thy infinite ſweetneſſes; I have needed even the compulſion of Laws to drive me to thee; and then indeed I loſt the ſweetneſs of thy Preſence, and reaped no Fruit. Theſe things, O God, are not well, they are infinitely amiſs. But thou that provideſt meat, thou alſo giveſt appetite; for the deſire and the meat, the neceſſity and the relief, are all from thee.*

II.

*Be pleaſed therefore, O my deareſt Lord, to create in thy ſervant, a great hunger and thirſt after the things of thy Kingdom and the righteouſneſs of it, all thy Holy Graces, and all thy Holy Miniſtries of Grace; that I may long for the Bread of Heaven, thirſt after the Fountain of Salvation, and as the Hart panteth after the Brooks of Water, ſo my Soul may deſire thee, O Lord. O kindle ſuch a holy flame in my Soul, that it may conſume all that is before me; that it may be meat and drink to me to do thy will.*

III.

*Grant, O Bleſſed Jeſus, that I may omit no opportunity of ſerving thee, of converſing with thee, of receiving thee; let me not reſt in the leaſt and loweſt meaſures of neceſſity, but paſs on to the Excellencies of Love, and the tranſportations of an excellent Religion; that there may remain in me no appetite for anything but what thou loveſt; that I may have no ſatisfaction but in a holy Conſcience, no pleaſure but in Religion, no joy but in God, and with ſincerity and zeal, heartineſs and ingenuity, I may follow after Righteouſneſs, and the things that belong unto my peace, until I ſhall arrive in the Land of Eternal Peace and Praiſes, where thou liveſt and reigneſt for ever, world without end.* Amen.

## CHAPTER III.

*Of Faith, as it is a neceſſary Diſpoſition to the Bleſſed Sacrament.*

EXAMINATION of ourſelves, is an Enquiry whether we have thoſe diſpoſitions which are neceſſary to a worthy Communion. Our next enquiry is after the diſpoſitions themſelves, what they ought to be, and what they ought to effect; that we may really be that which we deſire to be found, when we are examined. I have yet only deſcribed the ways of examining; now I am to ſet down thoſe things whereby we can be approved, and without which we can never approach to theſe divine Myſteries with worthineſs, or depart with joy. Theſe are three; 1. Faith, 2. Charity, 3. Repentance.

### Section I.—*Of Catechumens, or unbaptized Perſons.*

THE Bleſſed Sacrament before him that hath no Faith, is like meſſes of meat ſet upon the Graves of the dead, they ſmell not that nidour which quickens the hungry

belly; they feel not the warmth, and taſte not the juice; for theſe are provided for them that are alive, and the dead have no portion in them. This is the firſt great Line of Introduction, and neceſſary to be examined: we have the rule from the Apoſtle; *Examine yourſelves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your ownſelves. Know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?* As if he had ſaid, Ye are Reprobates, and Jeſus Chriſt ſhall never dwell in you, except by Faith; without this you can never receive him; and therefore examine ſtrictly yourſelves concerning your Faith.

But the neceſſity of this preparation by Faith hath a double ſenſe, and a proportionable neceſſity. 1. It means that no unbaptized Perſon can come to the holy Communion. 2. It means that thoſe that are baptized have an actual and an operative Faith, properly relative to theſe divine Myſteries, and really effective of all the Works of Faith. Of this we have the moſt ancient and indubitable Record of the Primitive Church: For in the Apology which *Juſtin Martyr* made for the Chriſtians, he gives this account of the manner of diſpenſing the holy Euchariſt. *It is lawful for none to participate of this Euchariſtical Bread and Wine, but to him who believes thoſe things to be true which are taught by us, and to him that is waſhed in the Laver of Regeneration, which is to the remiſſion of ſins, and who live as Chriſt hath commanded. Shut the profane and the unhallowed People out of doors;* So *Orpheus* ſang. None comes to this holy Feaſt but they whoſe ſins are cleanſed in Baptiſm, who are ſanc-

tified in thoſe holy Waters of Regeneration, who have obedient Souls, ears attentive to the Sermons of the Goſpel, and Hearts open to the Words of Chriſt. Theſe are they who ſee by a brighter Light, and walk in the warmth of a more refreſhing Sun; they live in a better Air, and are irradiated with a purer Beam, the Glories of the Sun of Righteouſneſs; and they are only to eat the precious Food of the Sacrificed Lamb: For by Baptiſm we are admitted to the Spiritual Life, and by the holy Communion we nouriſh and preſerve it.

But although Baptiſm be always neceſſary, yet alone it is not a ſufficient qualification to the holy Communion, but there muſt be an actual Faith alſo in every Communicant. Neither Faith alone nor Baptiſm alone can ſuffice; but it muſt be the actual Faith of baptized Perſons, which diſpoſes us to this ſacred Feaſt; For the Church gives the Communion neither to Catechumens nor to Infants, nor to mad Men, nor to natural Fools.

*Catechumens, not admitted to the Holy Communion.*

Of this, beſides the Teſtimony of *Juſtin Martyr*, St. *Cyril* of *Alexandria* gives this full account: *We refuſe to give the Sacraments to Catechumens, although they already know the Truth, and with a loud voice confeſs the Faith of Chriſt, becauſe they are not yet enriched with the Holy Ghoſt, who dwells in them, who are conſummated and perfected by Baptiſm: But when they have been baptized, becauſe it is believed, that the Holy Ghoſt does dwell within them, they are*

*not prohibited from the Contact and Communion of the Body of Christ. And therefore to them who come to the Mystical Benediction, the Ministers of the Mystery cry with a loud voice,* Sancta sanctis, *Let holy things be given to sanctified Persons: signifying that the Contact and sanctification of Christ's Body does agree with them only, who in their Spirits are sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* And this was the certain and perpetual Doctrine and Custom of the Church; insomuch, that in the Primitive Churches, they would not suffer unbaptized Persons so much as to see the Consecration of the Holy Mysteries, as is to be seen in many Ecclesiastical Records. The reason of this is nothing, but the Nature and Analogy of the thing itself. For we first come to Christ by Faith, and we first come to Christ by Baptism; they are the two doors of the Tabernacle, which our Lord hath pitched, and not man. By Faith we desire to go in, and by Baptism we are admitted. Faith knocks at the door, and Baptism sets it open; but until we are in the House, we cannot be entertained at the Master's Table: They that are in the Highways and Hedges, must be called in, and come in at the doors, and they shall be feasted: The one is the *moral* entrance, and the other is the *ritual:* Faith is the door of the Soul, and Baptism is the door of the man. Faith is the spiritual address to God, and Baptism is the Sacramental. Baptism is like the Pool of *Siloam* appointed for healing; it is salutary and medicinal: but the Spirit of God is that great Angel that descends thither, and makes them virtual, and Faith

is the hand that puts us in. So that Faith alone does not do it; and therefore the unbaptized muſt not communicate, ſo neither will Baptiſm alone admit us; and therefore Infants and Innocents are yet uncapable: But that's the next enquiry.

## Section II.—*Of Communicating Infants.*

### Queſtion, *Whether Infants are to be admitted to the Holy Communion.*

WHETHER the Holy Communion may be given to Infants, hath been a great queſtion in the Church of God; which in this inſtance hath not been as in others, divided by Parties and ſingle Perſons, but by whole Ages; for from ſome of the earlieſt Ages of the Church, down to the time of *Charles* the Great, that is, for above ſix hundred years, the Church of God did give the Holy Communion to newly baptized Infants. St. *Cyprian* recounts a Miracle of an Infant, into whoſe mouth (when the Parents had ignorantly and careleſſly left the Babe) the Gentile Prieſts had forced ſome of their Idol Sacrifice: but when the Miniſter of the Church came to pour into the mouth, the Chalice of our Lord, it reſiſted, and being overpowered grew ſick, and fell into Convulſions. By which Narrative the practice of the Church of that Age is ſufficiently declared. Of the matter of fact there is no queſtion; but they went further.

The Primitive Church did believe it neceſſary to the Salvation of Infants. St. *Auſtin* believed that this Doctrine and practice deſcended from the Apoſtles; that without both the Sacraments no Perſon could come to life, or partake of the Kingdom of Heaven, which when he had endeavoured to prove largely, he infers this Concluſion: *It is in vain to promiſe Salvation and Life Eternal to little Children, unleſs they be baptized, and receive the Body and Blood of Chriſt, ſince the neceſſity of them both is atteſted by ſo many, ſo great, and ſo Divine Teſtimonies.* And that this practice continued to the time of *Charlemagne*, appears by a Conſtitution in his Capitular, ſaying, *That the Prieſt ſhould always have the Euchariſt ready, that when any one is ſick, or when a Child is weak, he may preſently give him the Communion, leſt he die without it.* And *Alcuinus* recites a Canon, expreſſly charging, *That as ſoon as ever the Infants are baptized, they ſhould receive the Holy Communion before they ſuck, or receive any other nouriſhment.* The ſame alſo is uſed by the *Greeks*, by the *Ethiopians*, by the *Bohemians* and *Moravians:* and it is confeſſed by *Maldonate*, that the Opinion of St. *Auſtin* and *Innocentius*, that the Euchariſt is neceſſary even to Infants, prevailed in the Church for ſix hundred years together.

But ſince the time of *Charles* the Great, that is, for above eight hundred years, this practice hath been omitted in the Weſtern Churches generally; and in the Council of *Trent* it was condemned as unfit, and all men commanded to believe, That though the Ancient Churches did it upon ſome

probable reaſons, yet they did not believe it neceſſary. Concerning which I ſhall not interrupt the uſefulneſs, which I intend in this Diſcourſe, by confuting the Canon; though it be intolerable to command men to be believed in a matter of fact contrary to their evidence, and to ſay that the Fathers did not believe it to be neceſſary, when they ſay it is, and uſed it accordingly: yet becauſe it relates to the uſe of this Divine Sacrament, I ſhall give this ſhort account of it.

The Church of *Rome*, and ſome few others, are the only refuſers and condemners of this Ancient and Catholic Practice; but upon their grounds they cannot reaſonably deny it. 1. Becauſe Infants are by them affirmed to be capable of the Grace and Benefits of the Euchariſt; for to them who put no bar (as Infants put none), the Sacraments by their inherent virtue confer Grace; and therefore particularly it is affirmed, that if Infants did now receive the Euchariſt, they ſhould alſo receive Grace with it: and therefore it is not unreaſonable to give it to them, who therefore are capable of it, becauſe it will do them benefit, and it is conſequently (upon theſe grounds) uncharitable to deny it. For,

2. They allow the ground, upon the ſuppoſition of which the Fathers did moſt reaſonably proceed: and they only deny the Concluſion. For by the words of Chriſt, it is abſolutely neceſſary *to eat his Fleſh and drink his Blood:* and if thoſe words be underſtood of Sacramental manducation (in which interpretation both the Ancients and the Church of *Rome* do conſent), then it is abſolutely neceſſary

to communicate. For although there are other ways of *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*, besides the Sacramental manducation, yet Christ in this place meant no other; and if of this he spake when he said *Without doing this we have no life in us*, then it will not be sufficient to baptize them, though in Baptism they should receive the same Grace, as in the Eucharist; because abstracting from the benefit and grace of it, it is made necessary by the Commandment, and by the will of God, it is become a means indispensably necessary to Salvation. It is necessary by a necessity of the *Means*, and a necessity of *Precept*. True it is, That in each of the Sacraments there is a proportion of the same effect, as I have already discoursed; yet this cannot lessen the necessity that is upon them both; for so *Pharaoh's* Dream was doubled, not to signify divers events, but a double Certainty; and therefore although Children, even in Baptism, are partakers of the Death of Christ, and are incorporated into and made partakers of his Body; yet because Christ hath made one as necessary as the other, and both for several proportions of the same reason, the Church of *Rome* must either quit the Principle, or retain the Consequent; for they have digged a ditch on both sides, and on either hand they are fallen into inconvenience. But it will be more material to consider the question as it is in itself; and without relation to any Schools of Learning. Therefore,

3. It is certain that in Scripture there is nothing which directly forbids the giving the holy Com-

munion to Infants. For though we are commanded to examine, and ſo to eat; yet this precept is not of itſelf neceſſary, but by reaſon of an introduced cauſe; juſt as they are commanded to believe, and repent, who are to be baptized, that is, Perſons that need it, and that can do it, they muſt: and Infants without examination, can as well receive the effect of the Euchariſt, as without repentance, they can have the effect of Baptiſm. For if they be communicated, they and the whole Aſſembly do declare the Lord's Death; for that is done by virtue of the whole Solemnity, and it is done by the conjunct devotion of the whole Community: it is done by the Prayers and Offices of the Prieſt, and it is done by the action of every one that communicates: it is done in Baptiſm, and yet they are baptized, who cannot with their voices, publiſh the Confeſſion. Infants indeed, cannot diſcern the Lord's Body; ſo neither can they diſcern Truth from Falſehood; an Article of Faith from an Heretical Doctrine: and yet to diſcern the one, is as much required, as to diſcern the other; but in both, the caſe is equal; for they muſt diſcern when they can confound, or diſhonour; but till they can do evil, they cannot be tied to do good. And it were hard to ſuppoſe the whole Church of God in her beſt and earlieſt times, to have continued for above ſix hundred years in a practical Error; it will not well become our modeſty to judge them, without farther enquiry, and greater evidence.

4. But as there is no prohibition of it, ſo no Command for it. For as for the Words of our

bleſſed Lord recited by St. *John*, upon which the holy Fathers did principally rely; they were ſpoken before the Inſtitution of both the Sacraments, and indifferently relate to either; that is, indeed to them both, as they are the Miniſtries of Faith; but to neither in themſelves directly, or in any other proportion, or for any other cauſe; for Faith is the principal that is there intended; for the whole Analogy of the Diſcourſe drawn forth of its Clouds and Allegory, infers only the neceſſity of being Chriſt's Diſciple, of living the life of Grace, of feeding in our hearts on Chriſt; of living in him, and by him, and for him, and to him; which is the work of Faith, and believing in Chriſt, as Faith ſignifies the being of Chriſt's Diſciple.

5. The thing itſelf then being left in the midſt, and undetermined, it is in the power of the Church to give it, or to deny it: For in all things where Chriſt hath made no Law, the Church hath liberty to do that which is moſt for the glory of God, and the edification of all Chriſtian people. And therefore although the Primitive Church did confirm newly baptized perſons, and communicate them; yet as with great reaſon ſhe did change the time of *Confirmation* from their firſt Baptiſm, till they could give an account of their Faith; ſo with equal authority, when ſhe hath an equal reaſon, ſhe may change and limit the time of miniſtering the Communion. The Church is tied to nothing, but to the Laws of the Sacrament, and the Laws of Reaſon, and the Laws of Charity: but that either of them is reaſonable enough, may appear in the following conſiderations.

For the Primitive Church had all this to juſtify their practice: That the Sacraments of the Goſpel are the great Channels of the Grace of God: That this Grace always deſcends upon them that do not hinder it, and therefore certainly to Infants; and ſome do expreſſly affirm it, and none can with certainty deny, but that Infants, if they did receive the Communion, ſhould alſo, in ſo doing, receive the Fruits of it: That to Baptiſm there are many acts of prediſpoſition required, as well as to the Communion; and yet the Church, who very well underſtands the Obligation of theſe Precepts, ſuppoſes no Children to be obliged to thoſe pre-diſpoſitions to either Sacrament, but fits every Commandment to a capable ſubject. That there is ſomething done on God's part, and ſomething on ours; that what belongs to us, obliges us then, when we can hear and underſtand, but not before; but that which is on God's part, is always ready to them that can receive it: That Infants, although they cannot alone come to Chriſt, yet the Church their Mother can bring them in her arms: That they who are capable of the Grace of the Sacrament, may alſo receive the Sign; and therefore the ſame Grace being conveyed to them in one Sacrament, may alſo be imparted to them in the other: That as they can be born again, without their own conſent, ſo they can be fed by the hands of others; and what begins without their own actual choice, may be renewed without their own actual deſire. And that therefore it might be feared leſt, if upon the pretence of figurative Speeches,

Allegories and Alluſions, and the injunction of certain diſpoſitions, the Holy Communion be denied them, a gap be opened upon equal pretences to deny them Baptiſm. That ſince the Jewiſh Infants being circumciſed, is uſed as an Argument that they might be baptized, their eating of the Paſchal Lamb may alſo be a competent Warrant to eat of that Sacrament, in which alſo, as in the other, the ſacrificed Lamb is repreſented as offered and ſlain for them. Now the Church having ſuch fair probabilities and prudential motives, and no prohibition, if ſhe ſhall uſe her power to the purpoſes of kindneſſes and charity, ſhe is not eaſily to be reproved, leſt without neceſſity we condemn all the Primitive Catholic Church, and all the Modern Churches of the Eaſt and the South to this day, eſpecially ſince without all diſpoſitions Infants are baptized; there is leſs reaſon why they may not be communicated, having already received ſome real diſpoſitions towards this, even all the Grace of the Sacrament of Baptiſm, which is certainly ſomething towards the other: And after all, the refuſing to communicate Infants entered into the Church upon an unwarrantable ground. For though it was confeſſed that the Communion would do them benefit, yet it was denied to them, then when the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation entered, upon pretence, leſt by puking up the holy Symbols, the Sacrament ſhould be diſhonoured; which indeed, though that Doctrine were true, were infinitely unreaſonable, as ſuppoſing that Chriſt, who ſuffered his Body to be broken upon the Croſs,

that he might convey Grace to them and us, would refuſe to expoſe the Symbols to the accidents of a Child's ſtomach, and rather deny them that Grace, than endure that ſight, who yet does daily ſuffer Mice and Mouldineſs to do worſe unto it.

But on the other ſide, they that without intereſt and partiality, deny to communicate Infants, can conſider that Infants being in Baptiſm admitted to the Promiſes of the Goſpel, and their portion in the Kingdom of Chriſt, can have upon them no neceſſity to be communicated. For by their firſt Sacrament they are drawn from their mere natural ſtate, and lifted up to the adoption of Sons; and by the ſecond Sacrament alone they can go no further: That although the firſt grace which is given in Baptiſm, be given them as their firſt Being, yet the ſecond Graces are given to us upon other accounts, even for well uſing the firſt free Grace: That in Baptiſm there were promiſes made, which are to be perſonally accepted and verified, before any new Grace can be Sacramentally imparted: That it was neceſſity which gave them Baptiſm before their Reaſon, and that neceſſity being ſerved, there can be no profit in proceeding upon the ſame method, without the ſame reaſon: That Baptiſm is the Sacrament of the new born, the beginning, the Gate of the Church, the entry of the Kingdom, the Birth of a Chriſtian; but the Holy Euchariſt is the Sacrament of them that grow in grace, of them that are perfect in Chriſt Jeſus: And laſtly, to him that liſts to be contentious, we are to ſay, as St. *Paul* did, *We have no ſuch cuſtom, nor the Churches of God.*

Now theſe probabilities on both ſides may both of them be heard, and both of them prevail in the ſenſe of the former determination: For by the firſt it may appear, that to communicate Infants is lawful, but the ſecond proves that it is not neceſſary; for having in Baptiſm received ſufficient title to the Kingdom of Heaven, they who before the uſe of reaſon cannot ſin, and cannot fall from the Grace they have received, cannot be obliged to the uſe of the Sacrament, which is for their reparation and ſecurity; and therefore in this caſe, the preſent practice of the Church is to be our rule and meaſure of peace, and determination of the Article.

## Section III.—*Whether Innocents, Fools, and Madmen may be admitted to the Holy Communion.*

TO this I anſwer, That if Fools can deſire it, and can be kept innocent, the Church did never deny it to them; but unleſs they be capable of love and obedience in ſome degree, they muſt in no caſe be admitted. A vicious Fool is intolerable; and he that knows nothing of it, nor can be taught anything, muſt be permitted to the mercies of God, and the prayers of the Church; but he that is not capable of Laws, can be no part of a Society, and therefore hath nothing to do with Communion. If he can but learn ſo much that it is good for his Soul; if he can deſire to go to God, and if he can in any degree believe

in Chriſt, he will be judged according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not; but if he cannot diſcern between good and evil, but indifferently likes, and does one and the other, though mercy is to be hoped for him in the laſt account, yet becauſe he does that which is materially evil, and cannot diſcern what is ſpiritually good, he muſt not be admitted ſo much as to the Symbols of the Divine Myſteries.

But concerning *Madmen*, the caſe is otherwiſe, and therefore I am to anſwer with a diſtinction. If from a ſtate of ſin and debauchery they entered into their madneſs, their caſe is ſad and infinitely to be deplored, but their Debt-books are ſealed up, and are like dead men; until they be reſtored to reaſon, they cannot be reſtored to Grace, and therefore not admitted to the Sacrament. But if they were men of a good Life, they may in their intervals, that is, when they can deſire it, and when they will not uſe the Sacrament irreverently, be communicated. For the Seed of God abides within them, and no accident of nature can deſtroy the work of God, and the impreſſes of the Spirit; nothing but their own wills can do that.

For in theſe caſes it is a good rule, and of great uſe in the practice of the Sacrament: *Whoever can communicate Spiritually, may be admitted to communicate Sacramentally;* that is, they who are in a ſtate of Grace, and can deſire it, muſt not be rejected: And therefore good men falling into this calamity, when they have any eaſe from their ſadneſs, and that they can return to words of order,

and compoſed thoughts, though but for a while, though but in order to that Miniſtry, are not to be rejected.

But on the other ſide, whoever can hinder the effect of the Sacrament, they are not to be admitted to it, unleſs they do not only not hinder it, but actually diſpoſe themſelves to it: For if they can do evil, they can and ought to do good; and therefore vicious madmen having been, and ſtill remaining in a ſtate of evil, cannot be admitted till they do good; and therefore never while their madneſs remains. The godly man that is ſo afflicted may, but yet not till the fire that was hidden, makes ſome actual and bright emiſſions.

But then laſtly, for others who are of a *probable* life, concerning whom no man can tell whether they be in the ſtate of Grace or no; becauſe no man can tell whether he that comes with that ſadneſs be capable or no, no man can tell whether he does well or ill; and therefore he muſt determine himſelf by accidents and circumſtances, and prudential conſiderations, having one eye upon the deſigns and compliances of charity, and the other upon the reverence of the Sacrament. And the caſe is in all things alike with dying Perſons, paſt the uſe of Speech and Reaſon.

## Section IV.—*Of actual Faith, as it is a neceſſary diſpoſition to the Sacrament.*

BESIDES the Faith that is previous to Baptiſm, or is wrapped up in the Offices of that Sacrament, the Church of God admitted only ſuch Perſons to the Sacrament, whom ſhe called *Fideles* or Faithful, by a propriety or ſingularity, and eminency of Appellation. They accounted it not enough barely to believe, or to be Profeſſors; for the penitents and the lapſed, and the Catechumens were ſo; but they meant ſuch Perſons whoſe Faith was operative, alive, and juſtifying: ſuch men whoſe Faith had overcome the World, and overcome their Luſts, and conquered their ſpiritual Enemy; ſuch, who by Faith were real Servants of Chriſt, Diſciples of his Doctrine, ſubjects of his Kingdom, and obedient to his Inſtitution. Such a Faith as this, is indeed neceſſary to every worthy Communicant; becauſe without ſuch a Faith a Chriſtian is no more but a name; but the man is dead; and dead men eat not. Of this therefore we are to take ſtrict and ſevere accounts; which we ſhall beſt do by the following meaſures.

1. Every true Chriſtian Believer muſt conſent to the Articles of his Belief, by an aſſent firmer than can be naturally produced from the ordinary arguments of his perſuaſion. Men believe the Reſurrection; but it is becauſe they are taught it in their

Childhood, and they inquire no further in their age: their Parents and their Prieſts, the Laws of the Church, and the Religion of the Country make up the demonſtration; but becauſe their Faith is no ſtronger than to be the Daughter of ſuch Arguments, we find they commonly live at ſuch a rate, as if they did neither believe, nor care whether it were ſo or no. The confidence of the Article makes them not to leave off violently to purſue the intereſts of this World, and to love and labour for the other. Before this Faith can enable them to reſiſt a temptation, they muſt derive their aſſent from principles of another nature; and therefore becauſe few men can diſpute it with arguments invincible and demonſtrative, and ſuch as are naturally apt to produce the more perfect aſſent, it is neceſſary that theſe men of all other ſhould believe, becauſe it is ſaid to come from God, and rely upon it, becauſe it brings to God, truſt it becauſe it is good, acknowledge it certain becauſe it is excellent; that there may be an act of the Will in it, as well as of the underſtanding, and as much love in it as diſcourſe.

For he that only conſents to an Article, becauſe it is evident, is indeed convinced, but hath no excellency in his Faith but what is natural, nothing that is gracious and moral: true Chriſtian Faith muſt have in it ſomething of obſcurity, ſomething muſt be made up by duty and by obedience; but it is nothing but this, we muſt truſt the Evidence of God in the obſcurity of the thing. God's teſtimony muſt be clear to him, and the thing in all other ſenſes not clear; and then to truſt the Article,

becauſe God hath ſaid it, it muſt have in it an excellency which God loves, and that he will reward. In order to this, it is highly conſiderable that the greateſt argument to prove our Religion is the goodneſs and the holineſs of it; it is that which makes peace and friendſhip, content and conſent, which unites all Relations, and endears the Relatives; it relieves the needy, and defends the Widow; it ends ſtrife, and makes love endleſs; all other Arguments can be oppoſed and tempted by wit and malice, but againſt the goodneſs of Religion no man can ſpeak; by which it appears, that the greateſt argument is that which moves love, intending by love to convince the underſtanding.

But then for others who can enquire better: their enquiries alſo muſt be modeſt and humble, according to the nature of the things, and to the deſigns of God: they muſt not diſbelieve an Article in Chriſtianity, which is not proved like a concluſion in Geometry; they muſt not be witty to object, and curious to enquire beyond their limit; for ſome are ſo ingeniouſly miſerable, that they will never believe a Propoſition in Divinity, if anything can be ſaid againſt it; they will be credulous enough in all the affairs of their life, but impenetrable by a Sermon of the Goſpel: they will believe the word of a man, and the promiſe of their Neighbour: but a promiſe of Scripture ſignifies nothing, unleſs it can be proved like a Propoſition in the Metaphyſics. If *Sempronius* tells them a Story, it is ſufficient if he be a juſt man, and the Narrative be probable: but though Religion be taught by many excellent

men, who gave their lives for a teſtimony, this ſhall not paſs for truth, till there is no objection left to ſtand againſt it. The reaſon of theſe things is plain: they do not love the thing; their intereſt is againſt it: they have no joy in Religion: they are not willing and deſirous that the things ſhall appear true. When Love is the principle, the thing is eaſy to the underſtanding, the objections are nothing, the Arguments are good, and the Preachers are in the right. Faith aſſents to the Revelations of the Goſpel, not only becauſe they are well proved, but becauſe they are excellent things; not only becauſe my reaſon is convinced, but my reaſon yields upon the fairer terms, becauſe my affections are gained. For if Faith were an aſſent to an Article but juſt ſo far as it is demonſtrated, then Faith were no virtue, and infidelity were no ſin: becauſe in this there is no choice, and no refuſal: but where that which is probable, is alſo naturally indemonſtrable, and yet the concluſion is that in which we muſt rejoice, and that for which we muſt earneſtly contend, and that in the belief of which we ſerve God, and that for which we muſt be ready to die: It is certain, that the underſtanding, obſerving the credibility, and the will being pleaſed with the excellency, they produce a zeal of belief, becauſe they together make up the demonſtration. For a Reaſon can be oppoſed by a Reaſon, and an Argument by an Argument: but if I love my Religion, nothing can take me from it, unleſs it can pretend to be more uſeful and more amiable, more perfective and more excellent than

Heaven and Immortality, and a Kingdom and a Crown of Peace, and all the things, and all the Glories of the Eternal God.

2. That Faith which diſpoſes to the holy Communion, muſt have in it a fulneſs of confidence and relying upon God, a truſting in, and a real expectation of the event of all the Promiſes of the Goſpel. God hath promiſed ſufficient for the things of this life to them that ſerve him. They who have great Revenues and full Bags, can eaſily truſt this Promiſe: but if thou haſt neither Money nor Friends; if the labour of thy hands, and the ſucceſs of thy labour fail thee, how is it then? Can you then rely upon the Promiſe? What means your melancholy and your fear, your frequent ſighs, and your calling yourſelf miſerable and undone? Can God only help with means, or cannot he alſo make the means, or help without them: or ſee them when you ſee them not? or is it that you fear whether he will or no? He that hath promiſed, if he be juſt, is always willing, whether he be able or no; and therefore, if you do not doubt of his Power, why ſhould you at all doubt of his willingneſs? For if he were not able, he were not Almighty: if he were not willing to perform his promiſe, then he were not juſt; and he that ſuſpects that, hath neither faith nor love for God: Of all things in the World, Faith never diſtruſts the good will of God, in which he moſt glories to communicate himſelf to mankind. If yet your fear objects and ſays, that all is well on God's part; but you have provoked him by your

ſins, and have loſt all title to the Promiſe: I can ſay nothing againſt that, but that you muſt ſpeedily repent and amend your fault, and then all will be quickly well on your part alſo; and your faith will have no objection, and your fears will have no excuſe. When the Glutton *Apitius* had ſpent a vaſt Revenue in his prodigious Feaſtings, he killed himſelf for fear of ſtarving; but if *Cæſar* had promiſed to give him all *Sicily*, or the Revenues of *Egypt*, the Beaſt would have lived and eaten. But the promiſes of God give to many of us no ſecurity, not ſo much as the promiſe of our rich Friend, who yet may be diſabled, or may break his word, or die. But let us try again.

God hath promiſed that *all things ſhould work together for good to them that fear him*. Do we believe that our preſent affliction will do ſo? Will the loſs of our Goods, the diminution of our Revenue, the amiſſion of our Honour, the death of our Eldeſt Son, the unkindneſs of a Huſband, the frown of our Prince, the defeating of our ſecular Hopes, the unproſperous event of our Employment? Do we find that our Faith is right enough really to be ſatisfied in theſe things, ſo much as to be pleaſed with God's order and method of doing good to us by theſe unpleaſing inſtruments? Can we rejoice under the mercy by joys of believing at the ſame time, when we groan under the affliction by the paſſion of ſenſe? Do we obſerve the deſign of cure, when we feel the pain and the ſmart? Are we patient under the evil, being ſupported by expectation of the good which is promiſed to fol-

low? This is the proper work of Faith, and its beſt indication.

*Plutarch* tells, that when the Cowards of *Lacedemon* depicted upon their Shields the moſt terrible Beaſts they could imagine, their deſign was to affright their Enemies that they might not come to a cloſe Fight; they would fain have made their Enemies afraid, becauſe themſelves were ſo; which when *Lacon* eſpied, he painted upon a great Shield, nothing but a little Fly for his device; and to them who ſaid he did it that he might not be noted in the Battle, he anſwered, yea, but I mean to come ſo near the Enemy, that he ſhall ſee the little Fly. This is our caſe; our afflictions ſeem to us like Gorgon's heads, Lions and Tigers, things terrible in picture, but intolerable in their fury; but if we come near and conſider them in all the circumſtances, they are nothing but a Fly upon a Shield, they cannot hurt us, and they ought not to affright us, if we remember that they are conducted by God, that they are the effect of his care, and the impreſs of his love, that they are the method and order of a bleſſing, that they are ſanctified and eaſed by a Promiſe; and that a preſent eaſe, it may be, would prove a future infelicity. If our Faith did rely upon the Promiſe, all this were nothing; but our want of Faith does cauſe all the exceſs of trouble. For the queſtion is not whether or no we be afflicted, whether we be ſick, or croſſed in our deſigns, or deprived of our Children, this we feel and mourn for; but the queſtion is, whether all this may not, or be not intended to bring good to us? Not whe-

ther God ſmiles or no, but to what purpoſe he ſmiles? not whether this be not evil, but whether this evil will not bring good to us? If we do believe, why are we without comfort and without patience? If we do not believe it, where is our Faith?

And why do any of us come to the Holy Communion, if we do not believe it will be for our good? but if we do think it will, why do we not think ſo of our Croſs? for the Promiſe is that everything ſhall. Cannot the Rod of God do good, as well as the Bread of God? and is not he as good in his Diſcipline, as in his Proviſion? is not he the ſame in the School as at his Table? is not his Phyſic as wholeſome as his Food? It is not reaſon, but plainly our want of Faith that makes us think otherwiſe. Faith is the great Magazine of all the Graces, and all the Comforts of a Chriſtian, and therefore the Devil endeavours to corrupt the truth of it, by intermingling Errors, the ſincerity of it by hypocriſy, the ingenuity of it by intereſt, the comforts of it by doubting, the confidence of it by objections and ſecular experiences, and preſent conſiderations; by adherence to human confidences, and little Sanctuaries, and the pleaſures of the World, and the fallibilities of men. When *Xerxes* had a great Army to conduct, and great ſucceſſes to deſire, and various contingencies to expect, he left off to ſacrifice to his country Gods, forſook *Jupiter* and the Sun: and in *Lydia* eſpying a goodly Plantain tree, tall, and ſtraight, and ſpread, he encamped all his Army in the Fields about it, hung up Bracelets and Coronets upon the Branches, and

with coſtly Offerings, made his Petitions to the beauteous tree; and when he marched away, he left a guard upon his God, leſt anything ſhould do injury to the Plant, of which he begged to be defended from all injury. By ſuch follies as theſe does the Devil endeavour to deflour our holy Faith and confidences in God; we truſt in Man, who cannot truſt himſelf; we rely upon Riches, that rely upon nothing; for they have no ſtabiliment, and they have no Foundation, but are like Atoms in the Air; the things themſelves can bear no weight, and the Foundation cannot bear them. In our afflictions we look for comfort from wine or company, from a friend that talks well, or from anything that brings us preſent eaſe, but in the mean time we look not into the Promiſes of God, which are the Storehouſes of comfort; and like the Dogs at *Hypocrene*, we lick the water-drops that fall upon the ground, and take no notice of the Fountain and the full Veſſels. Theſe things are ſo neceſſary to be conſidered, in order to our preparation to the Communion, as they are neceſſary to be reduced to practice, in order to a Chriſtian Converſation: for the holy Communion is the ſummary and compendium of the Religion and Duty of a whole life; and as Faith cannot be *holy*, *material*, and *acceptable*, without it contain in it a real truſt in the Promiſes of God, ſo neither can it be a ſufficient diſpoſition to the receiving the Divine Myſteries, unleſs upon this ground, it be *holy*, *acceptable*, and *material*.

3. That Faith which is a worthy Preparatory to

the holy Communion, muſt be the actual principle and effective of a good life; a Faith in the *threatenings* and in the *commandments* of God. Who can pretend to be a Chriſtian, and yet not believe theſe words of St. *Paul: Follow after peace with all men, and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee God?* and yet if we do believe it, what do we think will become of us, who neither follow peace nor holineſs, but follow our anger, and purſue our luſt? If we do believe this, we had need look about us, and live at another rate than men commonly do. But we ſtill remain peeviſh and angry, malicious and implacable, apt to quarrel, and hard to be reconciled, lovers of money and lovers of pleaſures, but careleſs of Holineſs and Religion; as if they were things fit only to be talked on, and to be the ſubject of Theological Diſcourſes, but not the rule of our lives, and the matter of our care. It is expreſſly ſaid by St. *Paul, He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf.* Now if we obſerve what crowds of People in great Cities come to the holy Communion; good and bad, penitent and impenitent, the covetous and the proud; the crafty Merchant from yeſterday's fraud, and the wanton Fool from his laſt night's luſt; we may eaſily perceive that not many men believe theſe words. He that ſays to me, Drink not this, for it is poiſon, hath given me a Law and an affrightment, and I dare not diſobey him, if I believe him; and if we did believe St. *Paul*, I ſuppoſe we ſhould as little dare to be damned, as to be poiſoned. Our bleſſed Saviour told us, that *with what mea-*

*ſure we mete to others, it ſhall be meaſured to us again;* but who almoſt believes this, and conſiders what it means? Will you be content that God ſhould deſpiſe you, as you deſpiſe your Brother? that he ſhould be as ſoon angry with you, as you are with him? that he ſhould ſtrike you as haſtily, and as ſeldom pardon you, and never bear with your infirmities, and as ſeldom interpret fairly what you ſay or do, and be revenged as frequently as you would be? and what think you of theſe ſayings? *Into the heavenly Jeruſalem there ſhall in no wiſe enter anything that defileth, or profaneth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.* Do men believe God, and yet doing theſe things, hope to be ſaved for all theſe terrible ſayings? *Now the works of the fleſh are manifeſt, adultery, fornication, uncleanneſs, laſciviouſneſs,* &c. *of which I tell you before, that they which do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Certainly if we did believe that theſe things are ſpoken in earneſt, we ſhould not account fornication ſuch a decent crime, ſo faſhionable and harmleſs; or make ſuch a May-game of the fearful Lectures of damnation. For if theſe words be true, will men leave their ſins, or are they reſolved to ſuffer damnation, as being leſs troubleſome than to quit their vain Miſtreſſes? ſurely that's not it; but they have ſome little ſubterfuges and illuſions to truſt to. They ſay they will rely upon God's mercy. Well they may; if in *well doing they commit their Souls to him as to a faithful Creator:* but will they make God their Enemy, and then truſt in him while he remains ſo? That

will prove an intolerable experiment; for ſo ſaid God, when he cauſed his Name to be proclaimed to the Hoſt of *Iſrael; The Lord God merciful and gracious:* he cauſed to be added, *and that will by no means quit the guilty.* By no means? No, by no means; let us believe that as well as the other. For the Paſſion of our Redeemer, the Interceſſion of our High Prieſt, the Sacraments of the Church, the Body and Blood of Chriſt, the Mercies of God, the ſaying Lord, Lord, the Privileges of Chriſtians, and the Abſolution of the Prieſt, none of all this, nor all this together, ſhall do him good that remains guilty; that is, who is impenitent, and does not forſake his ſin. If we had Faith, we ſhould believe this, and ſhould not dare to come to the holy Communion with an actual guiltineſs of many crimes, and in confidence of pardon, againſt all the truth of Divine Revelations, and therefore without Faith.

But then here we may conſider, that no man in this caſe can hope to be excuſed from the neceſſities of a Holy Life, upon pretence of being ſaved by his Faith. For if the caſe be thus, theſe men have it not. For he that believes in God, believes his Words, and they are very terrible to all evil Perſons; for in Chriſt Jeſus nothing can avail but a New Creature, nothing but keeping the Commandments of God, nothing but Faith working by Charity, they are the Words of God. Wicked men therefore can never hope to be ſaved by their Faith, or by their Faith to be worthy Communicants, for they have it not. Who then can?

He only by his Faith is worthily disposed to the Communion, and by his Faith can be saved, who by his Faith lives a life of Grace, whose Faith is to him a Magazine of Holy Principles, whose Faith endears Obedience, and is the Nurse of a holy Hope, and the Mother of a never-failing Charity. He shall be saved by his Faith, who by his Faith is more than Conqueror, who resists the Devil, and makes him fly, and gives Laws to his Passions, and makes them obedient; who by his Faith overcomes the World, and removes Mountains, the Mountains of Pride and Vanity, Ambition and Secular Designs; and whose Faith casteth out Devils, the Devil of Lust, and the Devil of Intemperance, the Spirit that appears like a Goat, and the Spirit that comes in the shape of a Swine, he whose Faith opens the blind man's eyes, and makes him to see the things of God, and cures the lame Hypocrite, and makes him to walk uprightly. *For these signs shall follow them that believe*, said our Blessed Saviour; and by these, as by the Wedding Garment, we are fitted to this Heavenly *Supper* of the King. In short, for whatever end Faith is designed, whatever Propositions it tends to persuade, to what Duties soever it does engage, to what state of things soever it ought to efform us, and whithersoever the nature and intention of the Grace does drive us, thither we must go, that we must do, all those things we must believe, and to that end we must direct all our actions and designs. For the nature of Faith discovers itself in the affairs of our Religion, as in all things: if we believe anything to

be good, we ſhall labour for it, if we think ſo, we ſhall do ſo; and if we run after the Vanities of the World, and neglect our Intereſt of Heaven, there is no other account to be given of it, but becauſe we do not believe the Threatenings and the Laws of God, or that Heaven is not ſo conſiderable as thoſe ſottiſh pleaſures and trifling regards, for which all pains is too much, though we think all labour and all paſſion is too little. *Plutarch* tells, that when *Poverty* deſired to have a Child, ſhe lay with the God *Porus*, their God of Plenty, and ſhe proved with Child, and brought forth *Love*, by which they intended to repreſent the nature of the *Divine Love:* it is born of a rich Father, and a poor Mother; that is, it proceeds from a contempt of the World, and a value of God, an emptineſs of ſecular Affections, and a great eſtimate of Wiſdom and Religion.

But therefore it is that God, and the Fruits of his Garden, and the Wealth of his Treaſure, and the Meat of his Table, and the Graces of his Spirit, are not guſtful and delicious, becauſe we dote upon Muſhrooms and Colloquintida. But as Manna was given in the Deſert, and it became pleaſant when they had nothing elſe to eat: So it is in the ſweetneſſes of Religion, we cannot live by Faith, and rejoice in the Banquets of our Saviour, unleſs our Souls dwell in the Wilderneſs; that is, where the pleaſures and appetites of the World may not prepoſſeſs our palates, and debauch our reaſonings. And this was myſteriouſly ſpoken by the Pſalmiſt, *The broad places of the Wilderneſs ſhall wax fat, and the Hill ſhall be encircled with joy;* that is, What-

ſoever is barren and deſolate, not full of the things and affections of the World, ſhall be inebriated with the pleaſures of Religion, and rejoice in Sacraments, in Faith and Holy Expectations. But the love of money, and the love of pleaſures, are the intrigues and fetters to the underſtanding; but he only is a faithful man who reſtrains his paſſions, and deſpiſes the World, and rectifies his love, that he may believe aright, and put that value upon Religion, as that it become the ſatisfaction of our Spirit, and the great object of all our paſſionate deſires: pride and prejudice are the Parents of miſbelief, but humility and contempt of the World firſt bear Faith upon their knees, and then upon their hands.

## Section V.—*Of the proper and Specific Work of Faith in the Reception of the Holy Communion.*

HERE I am to inquire into two Practical Queſtions. 1. *What ſtreſs is to be put upon Faith in this Myſtery:* that is, *How much is every one bound to believe in the Article of this Sacrament, before he can be accounted competently prepared in his underſtanding, and by his Faith?*

2. *What is the uſe of Faith in the reception of the Bleſſed Sacrament? and in what ſenſe, and to what purpoſes, and with what truth it is ſaid that in the Holy Sacrament we receive Chriſt by Faith.*

*How much every man is bound to believe of this Myſtery.*

If I ſhould follow the uſual Opinions, I ſhould ſay, that to this preparatory Faith it is neceſſary to believe all the niceties and myſteriouſneſs of the Bleſſed Sacrament. Men have introduced new Opinions, and turned the Key in this Lock ſo often till it cannot be either opened or ſhut, and they have unravelled the Clue ſo long, till they have entangled it; and not only reaſon is made blind by ſtaring at what ſhe never can perceive, but the whole Article of the Sacrament is made an objection and temptation even to Faith itſelf; and ſuch things are taught by ſome Churches and ſome Schools of Learning, which no Philoſophy did ever teach, no Religion did ever reveal, no Prophet ever preach, and which no Faith can ever receive: I mean it in the prodigious Article of *Tranſubſtantiation*, which I am not here to confute, but to reprove upon practical conſiderations, and to conſider thoſe things that may make us better, and not ſtrive to prevail in diſputation. That therefore we may know the proper Offices of Faith, in the believing what relates to the Holy Sacrament, I ſhall deſcribe it in ſeveral Propoſitions.

1. It cannot be the duty of Faith to believe anything againſt our ſenſe; what we ſee and taſte to be Bread, what we ſee, and taſte, and ſmell to be Wine, no Faith can engage us to believe the contrary. For by our ſenſes Chriſtianity itſelf, and ſome of the greateſt Articles of our Belief were known by them, who from that evidence conveyed them to us by their teſtimony; and if the perception of ſenſe were not finally to be relied upon,

Miracles could never be a Demonſtration, nor any ſtrange event prove an unknown Propoſition; for the Miracle can never prove the Article, unleſs our eyes or hands approve the Miracle; and the Divinity of Chriſt's Perſon, and his miſſion and his power, could never have been proved by the Reſurrection, but that the Reſurrection was certain and evident to the eyes and hands of ſo many Witneſſes. Thus Chriſt to his Apoſtles proved himſelf to be no Spirit, by expoſing his Fleſh and Bones to be felt; and he wrought Faith in St. *Thomas* by his fingers' ends; the wounds that he ſaw and felt, were the demonſtrations of his Faith; and in the Primitive Church, the *Valentinians* and *Marcionites*, who ſaid Chriſt's Body was fantaſtical, were confuted by no other Argument but of Senſe. For Senſe is the evidence of the ſimple, and the confirmation of the wiſe; it can confute all pretences, and reprove all deceitful ſubtleties: it turns opinion into knowledge, and doubts into certainty; it is the firſt endearment of love, and the ſupply of all underſtanding: from what we ſee without, we know what to believe within: and no demonſtration in the World can be greater than the evidence of Senſe. Our Senſes are the great Arguments of Virtue and Vice; and if it be not ſafe to rely upon that evidence, we cannot tell what Pleaſure and Pain is: and a man that is born blind, may as well have the true Idea of colours, as we could have of pain, if our ſenſes could not tell us certainly; and all thoſe Arguments from Heaven, by which God prevails upon all the World, as

Oracles, and *Urim* and *Thummim*, and ſtill voices, and loud thunders, and the Daughter of a voice, and meſſages from above, and Prophets on Earth, and Lights and Angels, all were nothing: for Faith could not come by hearing, if our hearing might be Illuſions. That therefore which all the World relies upon for their whole Religion: that which to all the World is the great means and inſtrument of the glorification of God, even our ſeeing of the Works of God, and eating his Proviſions, and beholding his Light: that which is the great Miniſter of Life, and the Conduit of good and evil to us, we may rely upon for this Article of the Sacrament: what our Faith relies upon in the whole, ſhe may not contradict in this. *Tertullian* ſaid, That it is not only unreaſonable, but unlawful to contradict the teſtimony of our Senſe, leſt the ſame queſtion be made of Chriſt himſelf; leſt it be ſuſpected that he alſo might be deceived when he heard his Father's voice from Heaven: That therefore which we ſee upon our Altars and Tables, that which the Prieſt handles, that which the Communicant does taſte, is Bread and Wine; our ſenſes tell us that it is ſo, and therefore Faith cannot be enjoined to believe it not to be ſo. Faith gives a new Light to the Soul, but it does not put our eyes out, and what God hath given us in our nature, could never be intended as a ſnare to Religion, or to engage us to believe a lie. Faith ſees more in the Sacrament than the eye does, and taſtes it more than the tongue does, but nothing againſt it; and as God hath not two Wills contradictory

to each other, ſo neither hath he given us two notices and perceptions of Objects, whereof the one is affirmative, and the other negative of the ſame thing.

2. Whatſoever is againſt right reaſon, that no Faith can oblige us to believe. For although reaſon is not the poſitive and affirmative meaſure of our Faith, and God can do no more than we underſtand, and our Faith ought to be larger than our reaſon, and take ſomething into her heart that reaſon can never take into her eye; yet in all our Creed there can be nothing againſt reaſon. If true reaſon juſtly contradicts an Article, it is not *of the houſehold of faith*. In this there is no difficulty, but that in practice we take care that we do not call that reaſon which is not ſo: for although a man's reaſon is a right Judge, yet it ought not to paſs Sentence in an enquiry of Faith, until all the Information be brought in; all that is within, and all that is without it; all that is above, and all that is below; all that concerns it in experience, and all that concerns it in act; whatſoever is of pertinent obſervation, and whatſoever is revealed: for elſe reaſon may argue very well, and yet conclude falſely: it may conclude well in Logic, and yet infer a falſe Propoſition in Theology: but when our Judge is fully and truly informed in all that where ſhe is to make her judgment, we may ſafely follow it whitherſoever ſhe invites us.

If therefore any Society of men calls upon us to believe in our Religion what is falſe in our experience; to affirm that to be done, which we know

is impoſſible it ever can be done; to wink hard that we may ſee the better; to be unreaſonable men, that we may offer to God a reaſonable Sacrifice; they make Religion ſo to be ſeated in the will, that our underſtanding will be uſeleſs, and can never miniſter to it. But as he that ſhuts the eye hard, and with violence curls the eyelid, forces a fantaſtic fire from the Cryſtalline humour, and eſpies a light that never ſhines, and ſees thouſands of little fires that never burn; So is he that blinds the eye of his reaſon, and pretends to ſee by an eye of Faith, he makes little Images of Notion, and ſome Atoms dance before him; but he is not guided by the light, nor inſtructed by the Propoſition, but ſees like a man in his ſleep, and grows as much the wiſer as the man that dreamed of a *Lycanthropy*, and was for ever after wiſely wary not to come near a River. He that ſpeaks againſt his own reaſon, ſpeaks againſt his own conſcience, and therefore it is certain, no man ſerves God with a good conſcience, that ſerves him againſt his reaſon. For though in many caſes reaſon muſt ſubmit to Faith, that is, natural reaſon muſt ſubmit to ſupernatural, and the imperfect informations of art, to the perfect revelations of God; yet in no caſe, can true reaſon and a right Faith oppoſe each other; and therefore in the Article of the Sacrament, the impoſſible affirmatives concerning Tranſubſtantiation, becauſe they are againſt all the reaſon of the World, can never be any part of the Faith of God.

3. Whatſoever is matter of Curioſity, that our Faith is not obliged to believe or confeſs. For

the Faith of a Chriſtian is pure as Light, plain as a Commandment, eaſy as Children's Leſſons; it is not given to puzzle the Underſtanding, but to inſtruct it; it brings Charity to it, not darkneſs and obſcurity. Our Faith in this Sacrament is not obliged to enquire, or to tell *how* the Holy Bread can feed the Soul, or the Chalice purify our Spirits, *how* Chriſt is united to us; and yet we remain imperfect even then, when we are all one with him that is perfect: there is no want of Faith, though we do not underſtand the ſecret manner how Chriſt is really preſent, and yet this reality be no other but a reality of event and poſitive effect; though we know not that *Sacramental* is more than *Figurative*, and yet not ſo much as *Natural*, but greater in another kind. It is not a duty of our Faith to diſcern how Chriſt's Body is broken into ten thouſand pieces, and yet remains whole at the ſame time; or how a Body is preſent by Faith only, when it is naturally abſent, and yet Faith ought to believe things to be as they are, and not to make them what of themſelves they are not. We need not to be amazed concerning our Faith, when our over-buſy Reaſon is amazed in the Article; and our Faith is not defective, though we confeſs we do not underſtand, how Chriſt's Body is there incorporeally, that is, the Body after the manner of a Spirit, or though we cannot apprehend how the Symbols ſhould make the Grace preſential, and yet that the Grace of God in the Receiver can make the Symbols operative and energetical.

The Faith that is required of thoſe who come

to the Holy Communion, is of what is revealed plainly, and taught uſefully: what ſets Devotion forward, not what miniſters to Curioſity; that which the good and the plain, the eaſy and the ſimple man can underſtand. For if thou canſt not underſtand the reciprocations and pulſes of thy own Arteries, the motion of thy Blood, the ſeat of thy Memory, the rule of thy Dreams, the manner of Digeſtion, the diſeaſe of thy Bowels, and the diſtempers of thy Spleen, things that thou beareſt about thee, that cauſe to thee pain and ſorrow: it is not to be expected that thou ſhouldeſt underſtand the ſecrets of God, the cauſes of his Will, the impulſes of his Grace, the manner of his Sacraments, and the Economy of his Spirit. God's Works are ſecret, and his Words are deep, and his diſpenſations myſterious, and therefore too high for thy underſtanding. St. *Gregory Nazianzen* ſays of God: The more you think you comprehend of him in your underſtanding, the leſs he is comprehended; like the Sand of a Glaſs, which the harder you graſp, the leſs you can retain; or like the Sand of the Sea, which you can never number, but by going about it, you are confounded, and by doing ſomething of it, you make it impoſſible to do the reſt. Curious enquiries are like the contentions of *Protogenes* and *Apelles*, who ſhould draw the ſmalleſt line, and after two or three eſſays, they left this Monument of their Art, that they drew three lines ſo curiouſly, that they were ſcarcely to be diſcerned. And therefore ſince Faith is not concerned in intrigues and hard queſtions, it were very well if the

Sacrament itſelf were not diſguiſed, and charity diſordered, by that which is not a help, but a temptation to Faith itſelf. In the Holy Communion, we muſt retain an undoubted Faith, but not enquire after what manner the ſecrets of God are appointed. *Whether it be or no*, that is the object of Faith to enquire, and to accept accordingly. *What it is*, he that is to teach others, and ſpeak Myſteries, may modeſtly diſpute; but *how it is*, nothing but curioſity will look after. The Egyptians uſed to ſay, that unknown darkneſs is the firſt principle of the World; not meaning that darkneſs was before light; but by *Darkneſs* they mean *God*, as *Damaſcius* the *Platoniſt* rightly obſerves; ſaying, This darkneſs or obſcurity is the beginning of every intellectual Being, and every Sacramental Action: and therefore in their Ceremonies they uſually made three Acclamations *to the unknown Darkneſs:* that is, to God, whoſe ſecrets are pervious to no eye, whoſe dwelling is in a light that is not to be diſcerned, whoſe Myſteries are not to be underſtood by us, and whoſe Sacraments are objects of Faith and Wonder, but not to be diſordered by the miſtaking, undiſcerning eye of People, that are curious to aſk after what they ſhall never underſtand.

Faith is oftentimes ſafer in her ignorance than in buſy queſtions, and to enquire after the manner of what God hath plainly and ſimply told may be an effect of Infidelity, but never an act of Faith. If concerning the things of God we once aſk *Why* or *How?* we argue our doubt and want of confidence;

and therefore it was an excellent Counſel of St. *Cyril*, Believe firmly in the Myſteries, and conſent to the Words of Chriſt, but never ſo much as ſpeak or think, How is this done? In your Faith be as particular and minute, as Chriſt was in his expreſſions of it, but no more. He hath told us, This is his Body, This his Blood: believe it, and ſo receive it: but he hath not told us how it is ſo, it is behind a Cloud, and tied up with a knot of ſecrecy: therefore let us lay our finger on our mouth, and worſhip humbly. But he that looks into the eye of the Sun, ſhall be blind, and he that ſearches into the ſecrets of Majeſty, ſhall be confounded with the Glory.

*The next Enquiry is,*

*What is the uſe of Faith in this Sacrament?* It is tied but to little duty, and a few plain Articles. What then is the uſe and advantage of it? To what Graces does it miniſter, and what effects does it produce? To this the anſwer is eaſy, but yet ſuch as introduces a further enquiry. Faith indeed is not curious, but material: and therefore in the contemplation of this myſterious Sacrament and its ſymbols, we are more to regard the ſignification than their natural uſage; what they are by Grace, than what they are by nature; what they ſignify, rather than what they are defined. Faith conſiders not how they nouriſh the Body, but how they ſupport and exalt the Soul; that they are Sacramental, not that they are alſo nutritive: that they are made holy to purpoſes of Religion, not that they are ſalutary to Offices of nature; that is, what they are

to the Spirit, not what they are to Senſe and Diſputation. For to Faith Chriſt is preſent, by Faith we eat his Fleſh, and by Faith we drink his Blood; that is, we communicate not as men, but as Faithful and Believers: the meaning and the duty, and the effect of which are now to be enquired.

1. It ſignifies that Chriſt is not preſent in the Sacrament corporally, or naturally, but ſpiritually: for thus the carnal and ſpiritual ſenſe are oppoſed. So St. *Chryſoſtom* upon thoſe Words of Chriſt: *The Fleſh profiteth nothing: what is it to underſtand carnally?* To underſtand them ſimply and plainly as they are ſpoken. For they are not to be judged as they ſeem, but all Myſteries are to be conſidered with internal eyes, that is, ſpiritually. For the carnal ſenſe does not penetrate to the underſtanding of ſo great a ſecret, ſaith St. *Cyprian*. For therefore we are not devourers of Fleſh, becauſe we underſtand theſe things ſpiritually. So *Theophylact*.

2. Since the Spiritual ſenſe excludes the natural and proper, it remains that the expreſſion which is natural, be in the ſenſe figurative and improper; and if the holy Sacrament were not a Figure, it could neither be a Sign, nor a Sacrament. But therefore it is called the Body and Blood of Chriſt, becauſe it is the Figure of them, as St. *Auſtin* largely diſcourſes: *For ſo when Good-Friday draws near, we ſay, to-morrow, or the next day is the Paſſion of our Lord; although that Paſſion was but once, and that many Ages ſince; and upon the Lord's Day, we ſay, to-day our Bleſſed Lord aroſe from the dead, al-*

*though ſo many years be paſt ſince: and why is no man ſo fooliſh as to reprove us of falſehood? but becauſe on theſe days is the ſimilitude of thoſe things which were done ſo long ſince. Was not Chriſt once ſacrificed? and yet he is ſacrificed ſtill on the Solemnities of Eaſter, and every day in the Communion of the People: neither does he ſay falſe, who being aſked, ſhall ſay that he is ſacrificed: for if the Sacraments had not a ſimilitude of thoſe things whereof they are Sacraments, they would be no Sacraments at all. But moſt commonly, by their ſimilitudes things receive their names.* Thus *Tertullian* expreſſes this Myſtery. This is my Body, that is, the Figure of my Body. And St. *Gregory Nazianzen* calls the Paſſover, becauſe it antedated the Lord's Supper, *a Figure of a Figure.*

3. But St. *Auſtin* added well, the Body of Chriſt is Truth and Figure too. The Holy Sacrament is not only called the Lord's Body and Blood, for the Figure, Similitude, and Sacramentality; but for the real Exhibition and Miniſtration of it. For it is truly called the Body of Chriſt, becauſe there is joined with it the vital power, virtue, and efficacy of the Body: and therefore it is called by St. *Auſtin, The intelligible, the inviſible, the ſpiritual Body.* By St. *Hierom, The divine and ſpiritual Fleſh. The celeſtial thing*, by St. *Ireneus. The ſpiritual Food, and the Body of the Divine Spirit*, by St. *Ambroſe.* For by this means it can very properly be called the Body and Blood of Chriſt: ſince it hath not only the Figure of his Death externally, but internally it hath an hidden and ſecret, the proper and divine

effect, the life-giving power of his Body; ſo that though it be a Figure, yet it is not merely ſo, not only the Sign and Memorial of him that is abſent, but it bears along with it the very Body of the Lord, that is, the efficacy, and divine virtue of it. Thus our Bleſſed Saviour ſaid of *John the Baptiſt*, that *Elias* is already come, becauſe he came in the Power and Spirit of *Elias*. As *John* is *Elias*, ſo is the Holy Sacrament the Body and Blood of Chriſt, becauſe it hath the Power and Spirit of the Body of Chriſt. And therefore the Ancient Doctors of the Church, in their Sermons of theſe Divine Myſteries, uſe the words *Nature* and *Subſtance*, not underſtanding theſe words in the Natural or Philoſophical, but in a Theological Senſe, proper to the Schools of Chriſtians; by *Subſtance*, meaning the Power of the Subſtance; by *Nature*, the gracious effect of his Natural Body: the nature and uſe, and myſteriouſneſs of Sacraments ſo allowing them to ſpeak, and ſo requiring us to underſtand.

4. And now to this ſpiritual Food muſt be fitted a ſpiritual manner of Reception; and this is the work of Faith; that ſpiritual Bleſſings may inveſt the Spirit, and be conveyed by proportioned Inſtruments, leſt the Sacrament be like a Treaſure in a dead hand, or Muſic in the Grave. But this I chooſe rather to repreſent in the words of the Fathers of the Church, than mine own: *We ſee* (ſaith St. *Epiphanius*) *what our Saviour took into his hands, as the Goſpel ſays, He aroſe at Supper and took this; and when he had given thanks, he ſaid, This is my*

*Body; and we ſee it is not equal, nor like to it, neither to the inviſible Deity, nor to the Fleſh; for this is of a round form, without ſenſe: but by Grace he would ſay, This is mine; and every one hath Faith in this ſaying: For he that doth not believe this to be true as he hath ſaid, he is fallen from Grace and Salvation. But that which we have heard, that we believe, that it is his.* And again, *The Bread indeed is our Food, but the virtue which is in it is that which gives us life; by Faith and Efficacy, by Hope and the Perfection of the Myſteries, and by the Title of Sanctification, it ſhould be made to us the perfection of Salvation. For theſe Words are Spirit and Life, and the Fleſh pierces not into the underſtanding of this depth, unleſs Faith come. But then, The Bread is Food, the Blood is Life, the Fleſh is Subſtance, the Body is the Church. For the Body is indeed ſhewn, it is ſlain, and given for the nouriſhment of the World, that it may be ſpiritually diſtributed to every one, and be made to every one the Conſervatory of them to the Reſurrection of Eternal Life, ſaith St.* Athanaſius. *Therefore becauſe Chriſt ſaid, This is my Body, let us not at all doubt, but believe, and receive it with the eye of the Soul, for nothing ſenſible is delivered us; but by ſenſible things he gives us inſenſible or ſpiritual. So St.* Chryſoſtom. *For Chriſt would not that they who partake of the Divine Myſteries ſhould attend to the nature of the things which are ſeen, but let them (by Faith) believe the change is made by Grace. For according to the Subſtance of the Creatures, it remains after Conſecration the ſame it did before; but it is changed inwardly by the powerful virtue of the Holy*

*Spirit; and Faith ſees it, it feeds the Soul, and miniſters the Subſtance of Eternal Life: for now Faith ſees it all whatſoever it is.*

From theſe excellent Words, we are confirmed in theſe two things. 1. That the Divine Myſteries are of very great efficacy and benefit to our Souls. 2. That Faith is the great Inſtrument in conveying theſe Bleſſings to us. For as St. *Cyprian* affirms, the Sacraments of themſelves cannot be without their own virtue; and the Divine Majeſty does at no hand abſent itſelf from the Myſteries. But then, unleſs by Faith we believe all this that Chriſt ſaid, there is nothing remaining but the outward Symbols, and the ſenſe of Fleſh and Blood, which profits nothing. But to believe in Chriſt, is to eat the Fleſh of Chriſt. *I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me ſhall not hunger;* that is, he ſhall be filled with Chriſt; *and he that believeth in me ſhall not thirſt.* Coming to Chriſt, and believing in him, is the ſame thing; that is, he that believes Chriſt's Words, and obeys his Commandments; he that owns Chriſt for his Lawgiver and his Maſter, for his Lord and his Redeemer; he who lays down his ſins in the Grave of Jeſus, and lays down himſelf at the foot of the Croſs, and his cares at the door of the Temple, and his ſorrows at the Throne of Grace; he who comes to Chriſt to be inſtructed, to be commanded, to be relieved, and to be comforted; to this Perſon Chriſt gives his Body and Blood, that is, Food from Heaven. And then the Bread of Life, and the Body of Chriſt, and eating his Fleſh, and drinking his Blood, are

nothing elſe but Myſterious and Sacramental expreſſions of this great excellency; that whoever does this, ſhall partake of all the benefits of the Croſs of Chriſt, where his Body was broken, and his Blood was poured forth for the remiſſion of our ſins, and the Salvation of the World. But ſtill that I may uſe the expreſſion of St. *Ambroſe*, Chriſt is handled by Faith, he is ſeen by Faith, he is not touched by the Body, he is not comprehended by the eyes.

5. But all the enquiry is not yet paſt: For thus we rightly underſtand the Myſterious Propoſitions; but thus we do not fully underſtand the Myſterious Sacrament. For ſince coming to Chriſt in all the addreſſes of Chriſtian Religion, that is, in all the Miniſtries of Faith, is eating of the Body and drinking the Blood of Chriſt, what does Faith in the reception of the Bleſſed Sacrament, that it does not do without it? Of this I have already given an account: But here I am to add, That in the Holy Communion all the Graces of a Chriſtian, all the Myſteries of the Religion are ſummed up, as in a Divine Compendium; and whatſoever *mortal* or *myſterious* is done without, is by a worthy Communicant done more excellently in this Divine Sacrament: for here we continue the Confeſſion of our Faith which we made in Baptiſm; here we perform in our own Perſons what then was undertaken for us by another; here that is made explicit, which was but implicit before; what then was in the root, is now come to a full ear; what was at firſt done in Myſtery alone, is now done in Myſ-

tery and moral Actions and virtuous Excellencies together: here we do not only hear the Words of Chriſt, but we obey them; we believe with the heart, and here we confeſs with the mouth, and we act with the hand, and incline the head, and bow the knee, and give our heart in ſacrifice: here we come to Chriſt, and Chriſt comes to us: here we repreſent the death of Chriſt, as he would have us repreſent it, and remember him, as he commanded us to remember him: here we give him thanks, and here we give him ourſelves; here we defy all the works of darkneſs, and hither we come to be inveſted with a Robe of Light, by being joined to the Son of Righteouſneſs, to live in his eyes, and to walk by his brightneſs, and to be refreſhed with his warmth, and directed by his Spirit, and united to his Glories. So that if we can receive Chriſt's Body, and drink his Blood out of the Sacrament, much more can we do it in the Sacrament: For this is the chief of all the Chriſtian Myſteries, and the union of all Chriſtian Bleſſings, and the inveſtiture of all Chriſtian Rights, and the exhibition of the Charter of all Chriſtian Promiſes, and the exerciſe of all Chriſtian Duties. Here is the exerciſe of our Faith, and Acts of Obedience, and the confirmation of our Hope, and the increaſe of our Charity. So that although God be gracious in every diſpenſation, yet he is bountiful in this: although we ſerve God in every virtue, yet in the worthy reception of this Divine Sacrament, there muſt be a Conjugation of Virtues, and therefore we ſerve him more: we drink deep of his loving-

kindneſs in every effuſion of it, but in this we are inebriated: he always fills our Cup, but here it runs over.

*The Effects of theſe Conſiderations are theſe.*

1. That by [*Faith*] in our Diſpoſitions and Preparations to the Holy Communion, is not underſtood only the Act of Faith, but the Body of Faith, not only believing the Articles, but the dedication of our Perſons; not only a yielding up of our Underſtanding, but the engaging of our Services; nor the hallowing of one faculty, but the ſanctification of the whole man. That Faith which is neceſſary to the worthy receiving this Divine Sacrament, is all that which is neceſſary to the ſuſception of Baptiſm, and all that which is produced by hearing the Word of God, and all that which is exerciſed in every ſingle Grace; and all that by which we live the life of Grace; and all that which works by Charity, and makes a new Creature and juſtifies a Sinner, and is a keeping the Commandments of God.

If the manducation of Chriſt's Fleſh and drinking his Blood be ſpiritual, and done by Faith, and is effected by the Spirit, and that this Faith ſignifies an entire dedition of ourſelves to Chriſt, and ſanctification of the whole man to the ſervice of Chriſt, then it follows, that the wicked do not communicate with Chriſt, they eat not his Fleſh, and they drink not his Blood: they eat and drink indeed; but it is Gravel in their teeth, and Death in their belly; they eat and drink Damnation to

themſelves. For unleſs a man be a Member of Chriſt, unleſs Chriſt dwells in him by a living Faith, he does not eat the Bread that came down from Heaven. *They lick the Rock*, ſaith St. *Cyprian*, *but drink not the Waters of its emanation.* They receive the *ſkins of the Sacrament, and the brain of the Fleſh:* ſaith St. *Bernard.* But it is in this Divine Nutriment, as it is in ſome Fruits, the ſkin is bitterneſs, and the inward juice is ſalutary and pleaſant, the outward Symbols never bring Life, but they can bring Death; and they of whom it can be ſaid (according to the expreſſion of St. *Auſtin*) *they eat no ſpiritual meat, but they eat the Sign of Chriſt*, muſt alſo remember what old *Simeon* ſaid of his Prophecy of Chriſt, *He is a Sign ſet for the fall of many;* but his Fleſh and Blood ſpiritually eaten, is Reſurrection from the dead.

## Section VI.—*Meditations and Devotions relative to this preparatory Grace; to be uſed in the Days of Preparation, or at any time of Spiritual Communion.*

### St. *Bernard's* Meditation and Prayer.

THE *Chalice which thou (O ſweeteſt Saviour Jeſus) didſt drink, hath made thee infinitely amiable; it was the Work of my Redemption. Certainly nothing does more pleaſingly invite, or more profitably require, or more vehemently affect me than this love: for by how much lower thou didſt*

*for me descend in the Declinations of Humility, by so much art thou dearer to me in the Exaltations of thy Charity and thy Glory. Learn, O my Soul, how thou oughtest to love Christ, who hath given us his Flesh for meat, his Blood for drink, the Water of his Side for our Lavatory, and his own Life for the price of our Redemption. He is stark and dead cold, who is not set on fire by the burning and shining flames of such a Charity.*

I.

*Blessed Saviour Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, the Fountain of Life and Salvation; by thee let us have access to thy Heavenly Father, that by thee he may accept us, who by thee is revealed to us. Let thy Innocence and Purity procure pardon for our uncleanness and disobedience; let thy Humility extinguish our Pride and Vanity; thy Meekness extinguish our Anger, and thy Charity cover the multitude of our sins.*

II.

*O Blessed Advocate and Mediator, intercede for us with thy Father and ours, with thy God and ours; and grant that by the Grace which thou hast found, by the prerogative which thou hast deserved, by the mercy which thou hast purchased for us, that as thou wert partaker of our sufferings and infirmities, so we by thy Death and Resurrection, and by thy infinite gracious Intercession, may be made partakers of thy Holiness and thy Glory.*

III.

*Let the brightneſs of thy Divine Grace for ever ſhine upon thy Servants, that we being purified from all Error and Infidelity, from weak Fancies, and curious Enquiries, may perceive and adore the Wiſdom and the Love of God in the truth and myſteriouſneſs of this Divine Sacrament: and be pleaſed to lighten in our Spirits ſuch a burning Love, and ſuch a ſhining Devotion, that we may truly receive thee, and be united unto thee; that we may feed on thee the celeſtial Manna, and may with an eye of Faith ſee thee under the Cloud, and in the Vail; and at laſt may ſee thee in the brighteſt effuſions of thy Glory.* Amen.

## A Confeſſion of Faith, in order to the Myſteries of the Holy Sacrament, taken out of the Liturgy of St. *Clement*, to be uſed in the Days of Preparation or Communion.

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and Earth are full of thy Glory. Bleſſed art thou, O God, and bleſſed is thy Name for ever and ever.* Amen.

*For thou art holy, and in all things thou art ſanctified and moſt exalted, and ſitteſt on high above all for ever and ever.*

*Holy is thy only begotten Son our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who in all things did miniſter unto thee his God and Father, both in the Creation of the World, and in the excellent Providence and Conſervation of it. He ſuf-*

*fered not mankind to periſh, but gave to him the Law of Nature, and a Law written in Tables of Stone, and reproved them by his Prophets, and ſent his Angels to be their Guards: And when men have violated the natural Law, and broken that which was written; when they had forgotten the Divine Judgment manifeſted in the Deluge upon the Old World, in fire from Heaven upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *in many Plagues upon the* Egyptians, *in the ſlaughters of the* Philiſtines, *and when the wrath of God did hang over all the World for their iniquity, according to thy will, he who made man, reſolved to become a man; he who is the Law-giver, would be ſubject to Laws; he that is the High-Prieſt, would be made a Sacrifice; and the great Shepherd of our Souls, would be a Lamb and be ſlain for us. Thee his God and Father he appeaſed, and reconciled unto the World, and freed all men from the inſtant anger: He was born of a Virgin, born in fleſh: He is God, and the Word, the beloved Son, the firſt-born of every Creature, according to the Prophecies which went before him, of the Seed of* Abraham *and* David, *and of the Tribe of* Judah.

*He who is the Maker of all that are born, was conceived in the Womb of a Virgin; and he that is void of all Fleſh, was incarnate and made Fleſh: He was born in time, who was begotten from Eternity: He converſed piouſly with men, and inſtructed them with his Holy Laws and Doctrine: He cured every Diſeaſe and every Infirmity: He did Signs and Wonders among the People: He ſlept, and eat, and drank, who feeds all the living with food, and fills them with his bleſſing: He declared thy Name to them, who knew*

*it not: He enlightened our ignorances: He enkindled Godlineſs, and fulfilled thy Will, and finiſhed all that which thou gaveſt him to do.*

*All this when he had done, he was taken by the hands of wicked men, by the treachery of falſe Prieſts and an ungodly People, he ſuffered many things of them, and by thy permiſſion ſuffered many things of reproach. He was delivered to* Pilate *the Preſident, who judged him that is the Judge of the quick and dead, and condemned him who is the Saviour of all others. He who is impaſſible was crucified; and he died, who is of an Immortal Nature; and they buried him, by whom others are made alive; that by his Death and Paſſion he might free them for whom he came, and might diſſolve the bands of the Devil, and deliver men from all his crafty malices.*

*But then he roſe again from the dead, he converſed with his Diſciples forty days together, and then was received up into Heaven, and there ſits at the right hand of God his Father.*

*We therefore being mindful of theſe things which he did and ſuffered for us, give thanks to thee Almighty God, not as much as we ſhould, but as much as we can:* and here fulfil his Ordinance and believe all that he ſaid, and know and confeſs, that he hath given us his Body to be the food, and his Blood to be the drink of our Souls; that in him we live, and move, and have our being; that by him we are taught, by his ſtrength enabled, by his Graces prevented, by his Spirit conducted, by his Death pardoned, by his Reſurrection juſtified, and by his Interceſſion defended from all our Enemies,

and ſet forward in the way of Holineſs and Life Eternal.

*O Grant, that we and all thy Servants, who by Faith and Sacramental Participation communicate with the Lord Jeſus, may obtain Remiſſion of our ſins, and be confirmed in Piety, and may be delivered from the power and illuſions of the Devil; and being filled with thy Spirit, may become worthy Members of Chriſt, and at laſt may inherit Eternal Life; through the ſame our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *Of Charity, preparatory to the Bleſſed Sacrament.*

#### Section I.

THE ſecond great Inſtrument of preparation to the Bleſſed Sacrament, is Charity: for though this be involved in Faith, as in its Cauſe and moral Principle, yet we are to conſider it in the proper effects alſo of it, in its exerciſe and operations relative to the Myſteries. For they that ſpeak diſtinctly, and give proprieties of employment to the two Sacraments, by that which is moſt ſignal and eminent in them both reſpectively, call Baptiſm the Sacrament of *Faith*, and the Euchariſt the Sacrament of *Charity;* that is, Faith in Baptiſm enters upon the work of a good Life; and in the holy Euchariſt, it is actually productive of that Charity, which at firſt was deſigned and undertaken.

For Charity is that fire from Heaven, which, unleſs it does enkindle the Sacrifice, God will never accept it for an Atonement. This God declared to us by the Laws given to the Sons of *Iſrael* and *Aaron*. The Sacrifice that was God's portion, was to be eaten and conſumed by himſelf, and

therefore to be devoured by the holy fire that came down from Heaven: and this was imitated by the *Perſians*, who worſhipped the fire, and thought what the fire devoured, their God had plainly eaten. So *Maximus Tyrius* tells of them, that bringing their Sacrifices, they were wont to ſay, *O Fire our Lord, eat this meat.* And *Pindar* in his *Olympiads* tells of the *Rhodians*, That when they brought a Sacrifice to *Jupiter*, and had by chance forgotten to bring their fire, he accepting of their good intentions, and pitying their forgetfulneſs, rained down upon them a golden ſhower from a yellow Cloud; that is, a ſhower of fire came and conſumed their Sacrifice. Now this is the great Emblem of Charity: the flame conſumes the Feaſter's Sacrifice, and makes it a divine Nutriment; our Charity, it purifies the Oblation, and makes their Prayers accepted.

The Tables of the Lord, like the *Delian* Altars, muſt not be defiled with Blood and Death, with Anger and Revenge, with Wrath and Indignation: and this is to be in all ſenſes of duty and miniſtration *an unbloody Sacrifice.* The Blood of the Croſs was the laſt that was to have been ſhed. The Laws can ſhed more, but nothing elſe. For by remembering and repreſenting the effuſion of Blood, not by ſhedding it, our expiation is now perfected and complete: but nothing hinders it more than the Spirit of War and Death; not only by the emiſſions of the hand, or the apertures of a wound, but by the murder of the tongue, and the cruelties of the heart, or by an unpeaceable diſpoſition.

It was Love that firſt made Societies, and Love that muſt continue our Communions: and God who made all things by his Power, does preſerve them by his love, and by union and ſociety of parts every Creature is preſerved. When a little water is ſpilt from a full Veſſel, and falls into its Enemy duſt, it circles itſelf into a drop, and ſo ſtands equally armed in every point of the Circle, ſo dividing the forces of the Enemy, that by that little union it may ſtand as long as it can; but if it be diſſolved into flatneſs, it is changed into the nature and poſſeſſion of the duſt. War is one of God's greateſt Plagues; and therefore when God in this Holy Sacrament pours forth the greateſt effuſion of his love, peace in all capacities, and in all dimenſions, and to all purpoſes, he will not endure that they ſhould come to theſe Love-feaſts who are unkind to their Brethren, quarrelſome with their Neighbours, implacable to their Enemies, apt to Contentions, hard to be reconciled, ſoon angry, ſcarcely appeaſed. Theſe are Dogs, and muſt not come within the Holy Place, where God, who is the *Congregating Father*, and Chriſt the great Miniſter of Peace, and the Holy Spirit of Love, are preſent in Myſterious Symbols, and moſt gracious Communications.

For although it be true that God loves us firſt, yet he will not continue to love us, or proceed in the methods of his kindneſs, unleſs we become like unto him and love. For by our love and charity he will pardon us, and he will comfort us, and he will judge us, and he will ſave us; and it can never

be well with us, till love that governs Heaven itſelf, be the Prince of all our actions and our paſſions. By this we know we are tranſlated from death to life, by our love unto our Brethren: *That's the Teſtimonial of our comfort.* I was hungry, and ye fed me: I was hungry, and ye fed me not: *Theſe are the Tables of our final Judgment.* If ye love me, keep my Commandments: *That's the meaſure of our Obedience.* In that ye have done kindneſs to one of theſe little ones, ye have done it unto me: *That is the inſtalling of the Saints in their Thrones of Glory.* If thou bringeſt a Gift to the Altar, leave it there; go and be reconciled to thy Brother: *That's the great Inſtrument of our being accepted.* No man can love God, and hate his Brother: *That's the rule of our examination in this particular.* This is a new Commandment, that ye love one another: *There's the great Precept of the Goſpel.* This is an old Commandment, that ye love one another: *There is the very Law of Nature.* And to ſum up all, Love is the fulfilling of the Law: *That's the excellency and perfection of a man;* and there is the expectation of all reward, and the doing all our duty, and the ſanctification of every action, and the Spirit of life: It is the heart, and the fire, and the ſalt of every Sacrifice; it is the crown of every Communion. And all this myſterious excellency is perfectly repreſented by that divine Exhortation made by St. *Paul, Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the Feaſt,*

*not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of* Malice *and wickedneſs, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.*

Now concerning this Grace, if we will enquire after it, in order to a worthy receiving the Holy Communion, we muſt enquire after the effects and offices of Charity; and by the good we do, or are ready to do, take an account of ourſelves in this particular. The Offices and general Duties are three. 1. Doing good. 2. Speaking good: And 3. Forgiving Evil.

## Section II.—*Of doing good to our Neighbours.*

HE that loves me, does me good; for until love be beneficial, it is not my good, but his fancy and pleaſure that delights in me. I do not examine this Duty by our Alms alone; for although they are an excellent Inſtrument of Life, *(for Alms deliver from Death,* ſaid the Angel to old *Tobit,)* yet there are ſome who are bountiful to the Poor, and yet not charitable to their Neighbour. You can beſt tell whether you have charity to your Brother, by your willingneſs to oblige him, and do him real benefit, and keeping him from all harm we can. Do you do good to all you can? Will you willingly give friendly Counſel? Do you readily excuſe your Neighbour's faults? Do you rejoice when he is made glad? Do you delight in his honour and

proſperity? Do you ſtop his entry into folly and ſhame? Do not you laugh at his miſcarriages? Do you ſtand ready in mind to do all good offices to all you can converſe with? For nothing makes Society ſo fair and laſting, as the mutual endearment of each other by good offices; and never any man did a good turn to his Brother, but one time or other himſelf did eat the fruit of it. The good man in the Greek Epigram, that found a dead man's ſkull unburied, in kindneſs digging a grave for it, opened the incloſures of a Treaſure: And we read in the *Annals* of *France*, that when *Gontran* King of *Burgundy* was ſleeping by the murmurs of a little Brook, his Servant eſpied a Lizard coming from his Maſter's head, and aſſaying to paſs the water, but ſeeming troubled becauſe it could not, he laid his Sword over the Brook, and made an Iron Bridge for the little Beaſt, who paſſing, entered into the Earth, and ſpeedily returned back to the King, and diſturbed him (as it is ſuppoſed) into a Dream, in which he ſaw an Iron Bridge which landed him at the foot of the Mountain, where if he did dig, he ſhould find a great heap of Gold. The Servant expounded his Maſter's Dream, and ſhowed him the Iron Bridge; and they digged where the Lizard had entered, where they found indeed a Treaſure; and that the Servant's Piety was rewarded upon his Lord's head, and procured Wealth to one, and honour to the other. There is in human nature a ſtrange kind of Nobleneſs and Love to return and exchange good offices; but becauſe there are ſome Dogs who bite

your hand when you reach them Bread, God by the miniſtry of his little Creatures tells, that if we will not, yet he will certainly recompenſe every act of Piety and Charity we do one to another. This the *Egyptians* did well ſignify, in one of the new Names of their Conſtellations: For when the Wife of *Ptolemæus Evergetes* had vowed her hair to the Temple, upon condition her Huſband might return in ſafety; and ſhe did conſecrate the beauty of her head to the Ornaments of Religion, *Comonus* the Aſtronomer told her, that the Gods had placed her hair among the Stars; and to this day they call one knot of Stars by the name of *Berenice's* hair. For every ſuch worthineſs like this, will have an immortal name in ſome Record, and it ſhall be written above the Stars, and ſet by the names of the Sons of God, who by doing worthy things, have endeared Communions and Societies of Mankind.

In all the Sacrifices of the Ancients, they were hugely kind to one another; they invited their Friends to partake of the Sacrifice, and called them to a portion of pardon, that they might eat of that mercy and that forgiveneſs which they expected from their God. Then they ſent Portions to the abſent; then they renewed Leagues, and re-eſtabliſhed Peace, and made Marriages, and joined Families, and united Hearts, and knitted Intereſts by a thread and chain of mutual acts of kindneſs and endearment: And ſo ſhould we, when we come to this holy Sacrifice; we muſt keep our hearts entire to God, and divide them amongſt our Brethren,

and heartily love all them who feed upon the ſame Chriſt, who live by the ſame Faith, who are entertained by the ſame hope, and are confederate by the Laws, and the Events, and the Cauſes, by the Acts of Emanation of the ſame Charity. But this thing is plain, no diſcourſe here is uſeful but an exhortation; all that can be ſaid is this: that it is decent, and it is uſeful, and it is neceſſary that we be very kind, and very charitable to all the Members of Chriſt; with whom we are joined with the Ligatures of the ſame Body, and ſupported by the ſtrength of the ſame nouriſhment, and bleſſed by influences from the ſame Divine Head, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

## Section III.—*Of ſpeaking good of our Neighbours.*

IF it be not in our hands to do well, it muſt be in our hearts, and the contrary muſt never be upon our tongues: we are ſure we can ſpeak well, or we can abſtain from ſpeaking ill. If it be otherwiſe with us, we cannot be welcome here, we ſhall not worthily communicate. God opens his mouth, and his heart, and his bowels, his boſom, and his Treaſures to us in this holy Sacrament, and calls to us to draw water as from a River; and can we come to drink of the pleaſant Streams, that we may have only moiſture enough, to talk much and long againſt the honour of our Brother or our Siſter? Can it be

imagined that Chriſt, who never ſpake an ill word, ſhould take thee into his Arms, and feaſt thee at his Table, and dwell in thy heart, and lodge thee in his boſom, who makeſt thyſelf all one with the Devil; whoſe office and work it is to be an Accuſer of the Brethren? No, Chriſt will never feaſt Serpents at his Table: Perſons who have ſtings inſtead of tongues, and venom in all the moiſture of their mouth, and reproach is all their language.

We ſhould eaſily conſent, that he that killed a man yeſterday, and is like to kill another to morrow, were not this day worthy to communicate: now ſome Perſons had rather loſe their lives, than loſe their honour; what then think we of their preparation to the holy Communion, that make nothing of murdering their Brother's or their Siſter's fame? That either invent evil Stories falſely and maliciouſly, or believing them eaſily, report them quickly, and aggravate them ſpitefully, and ſcatter them diligently? He that delights to report evil things of me, that will not endure ſo much as to have me well ſpoken of, hath certainly but little kindneſs to me: he would very hardly die for me, or lay out great ſums of money for me, that will not afford me the cheapeſt charity of a good word. The *Jews* have a ſaying, *That it were better that a man were put into a flame of fire, than he ſhould publicly diſgrace his Neighbour.* But in this there are two great Conſiderations, that declare the unworthineſs of it.

1. They who readily ſpeak reproachfully of others, deſtroy all the love and combinations of

Charity in the World; they ruin the excellency and peculiar privilege of mankind, whoſe nature it is to delight in ſociety, and whoſe needs and nature make it neceſſary. Now ſlander and reproach, and ſpeaking evil one of another, poiſons love, and brings in hatred, and corrupts friendſhip, and tempts the biggeſt virtue by anger to paſs unto revenge. For an evil tongue is a perpetual ſtorm; it is a daily temptation, and no virtue can without a miracle withſtand its temptation. *If you ſtrike a Lamprey but once with a rod* (ſaith the Greek Proverb) *you make him gentle; but if often, you provoke him.* A ſingle injury is entertained by Chriſtian patience, like a ſtone into a pocket of Wool; it reſts ſoft in the embraces of a meek Spirit, which delights to ſee itſelf overcome a wrong, by a worthy ſufferance; but he that loves to do injury by talk, does it in all companies, and takes all occaſions, and brings it in by violence, and urges it rudely, till patience being weary goes away, and is waited upon by *Charity*, which never forſakes or goes away from patience. *A wound with the tongue is like a bruiſe, it cannot be cured in four and twenty hours.*

2. No man ſins ſingly in ſuch inſtances as theſe. Some men commit one murder, and never do another; ſome men are ſurprized and fall into uncleanneſs or drunkenneſs, but repent of it ſpeedily, and never again return to folly: but an evil and an uncharitable tongue is an accurſed Principle; it is in its very nature and original equal to an evil habit, and it enters without temptation, and dwells in every part of our converſation, and injures every

man, and every woman: and is like the evil Spirit that was in love with *Tobias* his Wife; if you drive him from *Nineve*, he will run to the utmoſt Parts of *Egypt;* there alſo, unleſs an Angel bind him, he will do all the miſchief in the World, for there is not in the World a worſe Devil, than a deviliſh Tongue.

But I am not now to ſpeak of it, as it is injurious to our Neighbour, but as it is an hinderance to our worthy communicating: *The mouth that ſpeaketh lies*, or ſtings his Neighbour, or *boaſteth proud things*, is not fit to drink the Blood of the Sacrificed Lamb. Chriſt enters not into thoſe lips, from whence ſlander and evil talkings do proceed, and the tongue that loves to diſpraiſe his Brother, cannot worthily celebrate the praiſes, and talk of the glorious things of God: and let no man deceive himſelf, an injurious talker is an habitual ſinner, and he that does not *learn the diſcipline of the tongue*, can never have the Charity of Chriſt, and the bleſſings of the peaceful Sacrament. Perſons that ſlander or diſgrace their Brother, are bound to make reſtitution; it is as if they had ſtolen a Jewel, they muſt give it back again, or not come hither. But they that will neither do nor ſpeak well of others, are very far from Charity, and they that are ſo, ought to be as far from the Sacrament, or they will not be very far from condemnation. But a good man will be as careful of the reputation, as of the life of his Brother, and *to be apt to ſpeak well of all men is a ſign of a charitable and a good man;* and that goes a great way in our preparation to a worthy Communion.

## SECTION IV.—*Forgiveneſs of Injuries a neceſſary part of Preparation to the Holy Sacrament.*

THIS duty is expreſſed not only as obligatory to us, but as relative to the Holy Sacrament, in the Words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *When thou bringeſt thy Gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, leave there thy Gift, and go, be firſt reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer.* This Precept was indeed inſtanced in the Levitical Sacrifices and Jewiſh Altars; but becauſe, as St. *Irenæus* obſerves, *the Precepts of Chriſt, however expreſſed, relate to* Moſes's *Law, but leſs principally, and chiefly deſign an Evangelical Duty;* and therefore he refers theſe words to the celebration of the Chriſtian Euchariſtical Sacrifice and Oblation; concerning which he hath theſe excellent words: *From the beginning God reſpected* Abel's *Offering, becauſe he offered in righteouſneſs and ſingleneſs of heart. But God regarded not the Sacrifice of* Cain, *becauſe he had a heart divided from his Brother, full of Zeal and Malice, and therefore, God, who knoweth all ſecrets, thus reproves him; If thou doſt rightly offer, but not rightly divide, be quiet, God will not be appeaſed with thy Sacrifice. For if any one in outward appearance offers a clean, a right, and a pure Sacrifice, but in his Soul does not truly apportion his Communion to his Neighbour, he hath ſin within, and*

*by his external Sacrifice does not bring God unto him, neither will the Oblation profit him at all, unleſs the Malice that he hath conceived within does ceaſe, but that ſin will make him every day more and more a Murderer.* In purſuance of this, St. *Cyril* tells, that the Ancient Chriſtians were wont before the Communion to kiſs each other, as a Symbol of reconciled minds, and forgotten injuries; and in confirmation of this practice, brings the preceptive words of our Lord now recited.

And our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf adds a Parallel to the firſt Precept, which gives light and explication to it: *When you ſtand praying, if you have anything againſt any man, forgive him, that your Father which is in Heaven may forgive you your treſpaſſes.* And ſo Chriſt taught us to pray, *Forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us.* Let us conſider what we do, and conſider what we ſay. Do we deſire to be forgiven no otherwiſe? Do not we exact every little ignorance, and grow warm at every miſtake? And are not we angry at an unavoidable chance? Would we have God to do ſo to us, and forgive us in no other manner, than as we do, that is, turn his anger into every ſhape, and ſmite us in every part? Or would we have God pardon us only for little things, for a raſh word, or an idle hour ſpent leſs ſeverely? If we do ſo to our Brother, it is a great matter; but if he reviles us to our head, if he blaſphemes, and diſhonours us, if he rob us, if he ſmite us on the face, what then? We rob God of his Honour, his Prieſts of their Reverence, his Houſes

of their Beauty, his Churches of their Maintenance: We talk vile things of his Holy Name, we deſpiſe Religion, we oppoſe his Honour, and care not for his Service. It is certain we do not uſually forgive things of this nature to our Brother; what then will become of our Prayer? and what will be the effect of our Communion? and yet it is certain there is nothing in the World eaſier than to forgive an injury. It coſts us nothing after it is once ſuffered; and if our Paſſions and fooliſh Principles would give us leave to underſtand it, the preciſe duty of forgiveneſs is a perfect Negative; it is a letting things alone as they are, and making no more evils in the world, in which already there was one too many, even that which thou didſt ſuffer. And indeed, that forgiveneſs is the beſt which is the moſt perfect Negative, that is, *in malice be children;* whoſe petty quarrels, though they be fierce as a ſudden ſpark, yet they are as innocent as the ſofteſt part of their own fleſh, and as ſoon out as that ſudden ſpark, and forgotten perfectly as their firſt dream: and that is true forgiveneſs; and without this, we can never pray with juſt and perfect confidence and expectations.

St. *Peter* gives this Precept in a conſiderable inſtance; *Give honour unto the Wife as unto the weaker veſſel, that your Prayers be not hindered;* that is, conſider that they are weak and tender, eaſily moved, and ſoon diſordered; their underſtanding is leſs, and their paſſions more; and if it happens to be ſo, bear their burthens, comply with their innocent paſſions, pity their infirmities, ſupply the

breaches made by their indiſcretions, take no notice of little inconveniences: Counſel ſweetly, reprove tenderly, ſtrike no fires, and enkindle no flames; that is, do all that you can for peace, without peeviſh quarrels and little commencements of a Domeſtick War: for if you give way to anything of this nature, it will hinder your Prayers; for how ſhall the Huſband and Wife pray together, if they be angry at each other? For without love, and without peace, it is to no purpoſe to pray. The devotion of a man that is not in actual peace and kindneſs with his Wife, is like a hot dead coal, it will burn his fingers that touches it, but it is wholly uſeleſs; but he that lives in peace with her, in love and prudent conduct, his devotion is a flaming fire: it kindles all that is round about it, it warms and ſhines, it is beauteous in itſelf, and it is uſeful to others; it is fit for the houſe, and fit for the Altar; it will ſet the Incenſe on ſmoking, and put the Sacrifice on fire. And ſo it is in every inſtance of Society and Converſation; but I inſtanced in this the rather, becauſe Charity at home, and a peaceable Society in a Family, is the firſt of all Public Unions. When *Philip* of *Macedon* perſuaded the Greek Ambaſſadors, that they ſhould invite their Cities to Peace and Concord, *Demaratus* of *Corinth* began to laugh at him for his Counſel, and thought it a thing ridiculous for him to ſpeak of Peace among the Greek Republics, who was always wrangling at home with his Wife *Olympias*. But as to the preſent matter.

The fourth Council of *Carthage* refuſed to ac-

cept the Oblations of quarreling and angry Perſons; it is like that of the High Prieſts, in the caſe of *Judas*, his reſtitution of the Money, they would not put it into the Treaſury, becauſe it was the Price of Blood. Now becauſe our Bleſſed Maſter in his Law hath handled all great angers and uncharitableneſs under *the title of Murder*, the Church thought it reaſonable not to receive the Offerings; that is, to reject from the Communion all thoſe Perſons that were in mutual feuds, enmities and fierce angers. *I wonder* (ſaith St. *Cyprian*) *what peace they can look for, that are at war with their Brethren? Theſe men may be compelled by their injunction of ſevere faſtings to be reconciled;* ſaid *Fabianus* the Martyr. And in the Decree of *P. Victor*, it was expreſſly commanded, *That they ſhould be driven from the Communion of all faithful People, who are not in peace, and have no Charity to all their Brethren.* This Decree was renewed and earneſtly preſſed in the Council of *Agatho*, *They that will not, by the Grace of God working within them, lay aſide the hatred and long ſuits and diſſenſions, firſt let them be reproved by the Prieſts of the City; But if they will not at their reproof lay aſide their enmity, let them by a juſt excommunication be driven from the Congregations of the Church.* Which Decree the Church of *England* hath inſerted into the ſecond Rubric before her Office of Communion, of which I ſhall afterwards give account. But for the preſent we may conſider, that it is infinitely reaſonable that he that needs, and comes for a great pardon, ſhould not ſtick at the giving a little; and he that

deſires to be like God, and comes to be united to him, ſhould do like him; that is, rejoice in remitting offences, rather than in puniſhing them. In this, as in all other things, we muſt follow God's example; for in this alone he elſe will follow ours. In imitating him it is certain we are innocent; and if in this he follows us, though we be wicked, yet he is holy, becauſe revenge is his, and he alone is to pay it. If therefore we will forgive, he will; if we will not, neither will he: For he makes his ſpear as long, and his angers as laſting as we do ours. But this Duty, and its great reaſonableneſs and neceſſity, I ſhall repreſent in the excellent words of the Talmudiſts, recorded alſo by the famous *Benſirach*. *He that revengeth, ſhall find vengeance of the Lord, and he will ſurely keep his ſins in remembrance. Forgive thy Neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto thee, ſo ſhall thy ſins alſo be forgiven when thou prayeſt. One man keepeth anger againſt another, and doth he ſeek healing from the Lord? He ſhoweth no mercy to any man that is like himſelf, and doth he aſk forgiveneſs for his own ſins? If he that is but Fleſh nouriſh hatred, who will entreat for pardon of his ſins?* The duty is plain, and the reaſon urgent, and the commandment expreſs, and the threatening terrible, and the promiſe excellent. There is in this no more to be ſaid, but that we conſider concerning the manner of reducing it to practice, in order to our preparation to a worthy Communion; and conſider the ſpecial caſes of Conſcience relating to this great duty.

1. Therefore we are bound to forgive every man

that offends us. For concerning every one of our Brethren it is equally true, that he is an excellent Creation, that he is thy Brother, that he is Heir of the ſame Hopes, born to the ſame Inheritance, deſcended of the ſame Father, nurſed by the Church, which is his Mother and thine; that there is in him God's Image drawn by the ſame hand, deſcribed in the ſame lines; that there are in him many good things, for which he can be loved, and many reaſons in him, for which he ought to be pardoned; God hath made many Decrees for him, and the Angels miniſter to him, and Chriſt died for him, and his ſoul is very precious in the eyes of God, and in Heaven itſelf; the man whom thou hateſt is very conſiderable, and there, there are great deſires for his temporal and eternal happineſs; and why ſhouldeſt thou deſpiſe, and why ſhouldeſt thou ſtand out againſt all this?

2. Not only every man, but every offence muſt be forgiven. The wiſe man ſays, *That for ſome things there will be no returning again:* a blow indeed, or an evil word may be pardoned; but for *upbraiding and pride, and diſcloſing ſecrets, and a treacherous wound, every Friend will depart, and never return again.* But he only tells how it will be, not what ought to be; what it is likely to be in matter of fact, not how it ſhould be in caſe of conſcience: and he means this of Societies and civil Friendſhips; but in Religion, we go higher, and even theſe alſo, and greater than theſe muſt be pardoned; unleſs we would preſcribe a limit

to God's mercy in the remiſſion of our ſins. He will pardon every ſin of ours, for the pardon of which we can rightly pray; but yet we muſt pray for it, and hope it upon no meaſures, but thoſe of our forgiveneſs. *O Jupiter* (ſaid the diſtreſſed Prince) *hear our Prayers, according to our Piety look upon us, and as we do, ſo give us help:* And there is no inſtance that can be conſiderable to the leſſening or excuſing of his Duty. We muſt forgive, not only Injuries in the matter of money; but in all Errors and Crimes whatſoever, in which any man can ſin, and thou canſt be offended.

3. Although in theſe things there is no difficulty, yet in the intention and expreſſions of this duty there is ſome. For if it be inquired what is meant by forgiving; many men ſuppoſe it is nothing but ſaying, *I forgive him with all my heart, and I pray God forgive him:* But this is but words, and we muſt have more material ſignifications of it than ſo, becauſe nothing can commute for the omiſſion of the neceſſary parts of this duty. It is therefore neceſſary that we obſerve theſe meaſures.

1. Every man that hath received injuries, be they never ſo great, muſt have a mind perfectly free from all intentions of revenge in any inſtance whatſoever. For when the queſtion is concerning forgiving him that did the wrong, every man can beſt anſwer his queſtion, by placing himſelf in the ſeat of him that did the offence, and conſidering to what purpoſes, and by what ſignifications, and in what degrees, and to what event of things himſelf would fain be pardoned, if he were in his caſe, and

did repent the injury, and did desire pardon. That is the measure and the rule; and we learn it from *Chrysologus*. Thou art a sinful man, and thou wouldst that God and man should always forgive thee. Do thou forgive always; so much, so often, so entirely as thou wouldst be pardoned thyself, so much, so often, and so entirely give pardon to thine enemy: and this, together with the reason of it, is well expressed in the Gospel of the *Nazarene*, *If thy Brother sins against thee in words, and offers thee satisfaction seven times in a day, receive him.* Simon *his Disciple saith unto him, Seven times in a day? The Lord answers, Yea, and I say unto you, Seventy times seven times. For even amongst the Prophets also, after they were anointed with the Holy Ghost, there was found the word of sin, that is, they also offended in their tongues.*

Against this there is no objection, but what is made by the foolish discourses of young men, fighters and malicious, who by the evil manners of the World, are taught to call revenge Gallantry, and the pardoning of injuries to be Pusillanimity and Cowardice: For this Devil that dwells in Tombs, and cannot be bound with chains, prevails infinitely upon this account, amongst the more glorious part of mankind; but (as all other things are, which oppose the Wisdom of God) is infinitely unreasonable, there being nothing in the World a greater testimony of impotency and effeminacy of Spirit, than a desire of revenge. Who are so cruel as Cowards? And who so revengeful as the weakest and the most passionate Women? Wise *Chry-*

*ſippus*, and gentle *Thales*, and the good old man, who being to drink his Poiſon, refuſed to give any of it to his Perſecutor; theſe men did not think revenge a pleaſure, or a worthy ſatisfaction. For what man is ſo barbarous, as to recover his Leproſy by ſucking the life-blood from dying Infants? A good man would rather endure ten Leproſies, than one ſuch remedy. Such a thing is revenge, it pretends to cure a wound, but does it with an intolerable remedy. It was the Song of *Cyclops* to his Sheep, *Feed you upon the tender herbs, I mean to feed upon the fleſh, and drink the blood of the Greeks:* This is a violence, not only to the Laws and Manners, but even to the very Nature of men. Lions indeed, and Tigers, do with a ſtrange curioſity eye and obſerve him that ſtruck them, and they fight with him above all the Hunters; to ſtrike again is the return of Beaſts; but to pardon him that ſmote, is the braveſt amends, and the nobleſt way of doing right unto ourſelves; whilſt in the ways of a man, and the methods of God, we have conquered our Enemy into a Friend. But Revenge is the diſeaſe of Honour, and is as contrary to the Wiſdom and Bravery of men, as dwelling in Rivers, and wallowing in fires, is to their natural manner of living. And he who out of pretence of valour purſues revenge, is like to him, who becauſe fire is a glorious thing, is willing to have a St. *Anthony's* fire in his face.

2. He that is injured muſt ſo pardon, as that he muſt not pray to God to take revenge of his Enemy. It was noted as a pitiful thing of *Brutus*,

that when his Army was broken, and himſelf expoſed to the inſolences of his Enemies, and that he could not revenge himſelf, he cried out moſt paſſionately in the words of the Greek Tragedy, to *Jupiter*, to take revenge of young *Octavius*. But nothing is more againſt the nobleneſs of a Chriſtian Spirit, and the intereſt of a holy Communion, than when all meet together, to pray for all, and all for every one, that any man ſhould except his Enemy, that he who prays for bleſſings to the whole myſtical Body of Chriſt, ſhould ſecretly deſire that one Member ſhould periſh. If one prays for thee, and another prays againſt thee, who knows whether thou ſhalt be bleſſed or accurſed?

3. He that means to communicate worthily, muſt ſo forgive his Enemy, as never to upbraid his crime any more. For we muſt ſo forgive, as that we forget it; not in the ſenſe of nature, but perfectly in the ſenſe of Charity. For to what good purpoſe can any man keep a Record of a ſhrewd turn, but to become a ſpy upon the actions of his Enemy, watchful to do him ſhame, or by that to aggravate every new offence? It was a malicious part of *Darius*, when the *Athenians* had plundered *Sardis*, he reſolving to remember the evil turn, till he had done them a miſchief, commanded one of his Servants, that every time he waited at Supper, he ſhould thrice call upon him, *Sir, remember the* Athenians. The Devil is apt enough to do this office for any man; and he that keeps in mind an injury, needs no other tempter to uncharitableneſs but his own memory. He that

reſolves to remember it, never does forgive it perfectly, but is the under-officer of his own malice. For as Rivers that run under Ground, do infallibly fall into the Sea, and mingle with the ſalt waters: ſo is the injury that is remembered; it runs under ground indeed, and the anger is hid, but it tends certainly to miſchief; and though it be ſometimes leſs deadly, for want of opportunity, yet it is never leſs dangerous.

4. He that would communicate worthily, muſt ſo pardon his Enemy, that though he be certain the man is in the wrong, and ſinned againſt God in the cauſe, yet he muſt not, under pretence of righting God and Religion, and the Laws, purſue his own anger and revenge, and bring him to evil. Every man is concerned, that evil be to him that loves it, but we cozen ourſelves by thinking that we have nothing to do to pardon God's Enemies, and vile Perſons. It is true, we have not, but neither hath any private man any thing to do to puniſh them; but he that cannot pardon God's Enemy, can pray to God that he would: and it were better to let it all alone, than to deſtroy Charity upon pretence of Juſtice or Religion. For if this wicked man were thy Friend, it may be very well ſuppoſed that thou wouldeſt be very kind to him, though he were God's Enemy: and we are eaſy enough to think well of him that pleaſes us, let him diſpleaſe whom he liſt beſides.

5. He may worthily communicate, that ſo pardons his Enemy, as that he endeavour to make him to be his Friend. Are you ready to do him good?

Can you relieve your Enemy, if he were in want? Yes, it may be you can, and you wiſh it were come to that. And ſome men will purſue their Enemy with implacable proſecution, till they have got him under their feet; and then they delight to lift him up, and to ſpeak kindly to the man, and forgive him with all the nobleneſs and bravery in the World. But let us take heed, leſt inſtead of ſhewing mercy, we make a triumph. Relieve his need, and be troubled that he needs it. Reſcue him from the calamity which he hath brought upon himſelf, or is fallen into by miſadventure, but never thruſt him down, that thou mayeſt be honoured and glorious, by raiſing him from that calamity, in which thou art ſecretly delighted that he is intangled. *Lycurgus* of *Sparta*, in a tumult made againſt him by ſome Citizens, loſt an eye: which fact, the wiſer part of the People infinitely deteſting, gave the Villain that did it into the Prince's power; and he uſed it worthily; he kept him in his houſe a year, he taught him virtue, and brought him forth to the People a worthy Citizen. To pardon thy Enemy, as *David* pardoned *Abſalom*, that is true Charity, and he that does ſo pardon, needs no farther inquiry into the caſe of conſcience. It was an excellent ſaying of *Seneca*, *When thou doſt forgive thy Enemy, rather ſeem to acquit him than to pardon him; rather excuſe the fault, than only forbear the puniſhment: for no puniſhment is greater, than ſo to order thy pardon, that it ſhall glorify thy kindneſs, and upbraid and reproach his ſin.*

6. He that would be truly charitable in his for-

giveneſs, and with juſt meaſures would communicate, muſt ſo pardon his Enemy, that he reſtore him to the ſame ſtate of love and friendſhip as before. This is urged by St. *Bernard*, as the great imitation of the Divine Mercy. God hath ſo freely, ſo entirely pardoned our ſins, that he neither condemns by revenging, nor confounds by upbraiding, nor loves leſs by imputing. He revenges not at all, he never upbraids, and when he hath once pardoned, he never imputes it to any evil purpoſes any more. And juſt ſo muſt our reconciliation be; we muſt love him as we loved him before; for if we love him leſs we puniſh him, if our love was valuable; then he is forgiven *indeed*, when he hath loſt nothing. I ſhould be thought ſevere if I ſhould ſay, that the true forgiveneſs and reconciliation does imply a greater kindneſs after than before; but ſuch is the effect of repentance, and ſo is the nature of love. *There is more joy over one ſinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine juſt Perſons that need no repentance:* and a broken love is like a broken bone, ſet it well, and it is the ſtronger for the fracture. When *Nicanor* railed upon *Philip* of *Macedon* he ſlighted him, and he railed ſtill; he then reproved him, but withal forgave him, and ſtill he railed; but when he forgave him, and gave him a Donative, he ſealed *Nicanor's* pardon, he confuted his calumny, and taught him virtue.

But this depends not upon the injured Perſon alone, but upon the return and repentance of him that did it. For no man is the better with God for having ſinned againſt him; and no man for

having injured his Brother, can be the better beloved by him: But if the ſinner double his care in his repentance, and if the offending man increaſe his kindneſs, juſtice, and endearments in his return to friendſhip, then it is the duty of Charity ſo to pardon, ſo to reſtore as the man deſerves; that is, the ſin muſt not be remembered in anger, to leſſen the worthineſs of his amends. And this is that which our bleſſed Saviour ſays, *If he ſhall return, and ſay, I repent, thou ſhalt forgive him.*

But the underſtanding of this great Duty will require a little more exactneſs; let us therefore enquire more particularly into the practical Queſtions, or Caſes of Conſcience relating to this Duty.

1. How far we are bound to forgive our Enemy that does repent, and how far him that does not?

2. How long and how often muſt we proceed in our pardon to the penitent?

3. What indications and ſigns of repentance are we to require and accept as ſufficient?

4. Whether after every relapſe muſt the conditions of his pardon be harder than before?

5. Whether the injured Perſon be bound to offer peace, and ſeek for reconcilement? or whether may he let it alone, if the offending party does not ſeek it?

6. Whether the Precept of Charity and Forgiveneſs obliges us not to go to Law?

7. What Charity or Forgiveneſs the offended Huſband or Wife is to give the other, in caſe of Adultery repented of?

Queſtion I.—*Whether we are to forgive him that does not repent, and how far if he does, and how far if he does not?*

If he have done me no wrong, there is nothing to be forgiven; and if he offers to give me ſatiſfaction, he is out of my debt. But if he hath been injurious, and does not repair me, then I have ſomething to pardon. But what reaſon is there in that religion, that requires me to reward a ſinner with a gift, to take my Enemy into my boſom, to invite new injuries by ſuffering and kindly rewarding the old? For by this means we may have injury enough, and ſin ſhall live at the charge of the good man's Piety, and Charity ſhall be the fuel of Malice; what therefore is our duty in this caſe?

I anſwer, That there is a double ſort of pardon or forgiveneſs: The firſt and leaſt is that which neither exacts revenge ourſelves, nor requires it of God, nor delights in it if it happens: and this is due to all; thoſe very Enemies that do not repent, that ceaſe not ſtill to perſecute you with evil, muſt thus be pardoned, whether they care for it or no, whether they aſk it or aſk it not: For theſe we muſt alſo pray, we muſt bleſs them, we muſt ſpeak as much good of them, as occaſion and juſtice do require; and we muſt love them, that is, do them juſtice, and do them kindneſs: and this is expreſſly required of us by our bleſſed Saviour.

But there is alſo another forgiveneſs, that is, a reſtitution to the firſt ſtate of friendſhip; to love

him as well, to think as well of him; and this is only due to them that repent, and aſk pardon, and make amends as they can: for then the proper office of thy charity is to pity thy Brother's infirmity, to accept his ſorrow, to entertain his friendſhip and his amends, and to put a period to his repentance for having troubled thee. For his ſatisfaction and reſtitution hath taken away the material part of the injury, and thou art as well as thou wert before, or at leaſt he would fain have thee ſo; and then there can be nothing elſe done, but what is done by thy Charity; and by this thou muſt bear a ſhare in his ſorrow, believe his affirmation, accept his repentance, cancel his guilt, take off the remanent obligations, remove ſuſpicion from him, entertain no jealouſies of him, but in all things truſt him where Charity is not imprudent.

For it is not always ſafe to employ a Perſon that hath deceived my truſt, and done me wrong. But if you perceive that he may wiſely be truſted and employed, Charity muſt take off the Objection of his former failing. If by repentance he hath cut off the evil that he did thee, and that evil by which he did it, then if you refuſe to employ him, becauſe he once did you wrong, it is revenge and not prudence. If he offended thee by pride, by anger, by covetouſneſs; it is not enough that he ſay, *Sir, forgive me, I will make you amends:* It is enough to make you pardon him, and perfectly to be reconciled to him; but unleſs his repentance hath deſtroyed his covetouſneſs, his anger, or his pride, the evil principle remains, and he will injure thee

again. Which thing, if wiſely and without pretences thou canſt really perceive, to truſt or to employ him in ſuch inſtances in which he formerly did thee injury, is not prudent nor ſafe; and no charity ties thee to be a fool, and to ſuffer thyſelf to be tempted. Only be careful that you do not miſtake jealouſy for prudence, and ſo loſe the rewards of Charity; leſt when we think ourſelves wiſe, we become fools.

Queſtion II.—*How long and how often muſt we proceed in our forgiveneſs, and accept of the repentance of injurious Perſons?*

To this we need no anſwer, but the words of our Bleſſed Saviour, *If thy Brother treſpaſs againſt thee ſeven times in a day, and ſeven times in a day turn again unto thee, ſaying, I repent, thou ſhalt forgive him.* Now this ſeven times in a day, and ſeventy times ſeven times, is not a determined number, but ſignifies infinitely. *Seven times in a day do I praiſe thee,* ſaid *David.* From this definite number ſome ages of the Church took their pattern for their Canonical hours. It was well enough, though in the truth of the thing he meant, I will praiſe thee continually: and ſo muſt our pardoning be. *For if Chriſt hath forgiven thee but ſeventy times ſeven times* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *then do thou alſo ſtop there, let his meaſure be thine. If he denied to ſpare thee for the next fault, do thou ſo to thy Brother.* But St. *Hierom* obſerves concerning this number, That Chriſt requires us to forgive our Brother ſeventy times ſeven times in a day, that is, four hundred

and ninety times; meaning that we muſt be ready to forgive him oftener than he can need it. Now though he that ſins frequently, and repents frequently, gives great reaſon to believe that his repentances are but pretended, and that ſuch repentances before God ſignify nothing, yet that is nothing to us; it may be they are rendered ineffectual by the relapſe, and that they were good for the preſent, as *Ahab's* was: but whether they be or be not, yet if he be not aſhamed to repent ſo often, we muſt think it no ſhame and no imprudence to forgive him, and to forgive him ſo, that he be reſtored entirely to his former ſtate of good things; that is, there muſt be no let in thy Charity; if there be in prudence, that's another conſideration: But his ſecond repentance muſt be accepted as well as his firſt, and his tenth as well as his fifth. And if any man think it hard ſo often to be tied to accept his repentance, let him underſtand, that it is becauſe himſelf hath not yet been called to Judgment; he hath not heard the voice of the Exactor, he hath not yet been delivered to the Tormentors, nor ſummed up his own accounts, nor beheld with amazement the vaſt number of his ſins. He that hath in deepeſt apprehenſion placed himſelf before the dreadful Tribunal of God, or felt the ſmart of conſcience, or hath been affrighted with the fears of Hell, or remembers how often he hath been ſpared from an horrible damnation, will not be ready to ſtrangle his Brother, and afflict him for a trifle, becauſe he conſiders his own dangers of periſhing for a ſum which can never be paid, if it never be forgiven.

Queſtion III.—*What Indications and Signs of Repentance are we to require and to accept as ſufficient?*

I anſwer, that for this circumſtance there is a proper uſe and exerciſe of our Charity, as in the direct forgiveneſs. We are not to exact ſecurities and demonſtrations Mathematical, nor to demand the extremity of things. If the Enemy be willing to make an amends, accept of his very willingneſs *for ſome part*, and his amends for the other. Let every good act be forwardly entertained, and perſuade you heartily that all is well within. If you can reaſonably think ſo, you are bound to think ſo; for after all the ſigns of repentance in the World, he may deceive you; and whether his heart be right or not, you can never know but by the Judgment of Charity; and that you may better uſe betimes. For whenever your returning Enemy ſays he does repent (that is, gives human and probable indications of his repentance,) you cannot tell but that he ſays true; and therefore you muſt forgive. The words of Chriſt are plain: If he *returns*, ſaying I do repent: then it is a Duty, and we can ſtay no longer; for he that confeſſes his ſin, and prays for pardon, hath done great violence and mortification to himſelf, he hath puniſhed his fault, and then there is nothing left to be done by the offended party, but to return to mercy and charity. But in this affair it is remarkable what we are commanded by our Bleſſed Lord: *Agree with thine Ad-*

*verſary quickly, &c. leſt thou be conſtrained to pay the utmoſt farthing.* Plainly intimating, that in reconcilements and returns of friendſhip, there is ſuppoſed always ſomething to be abated, ſomething clearly forgiven: for if he pay thee to the utmoſt farthing, thou haſt forgiven nothing. It is merchandiſe and not forgiveneſs to reſtore him that does as much as you can require. *Be not over righteous*, ſaith *Solomon;* that is, let Charity do ſomething of thy work, allow to her place, and powers, and opportunity. It was an excellent ſaying of St. *Bernard's: God is never called the God of revenges, but the Father of Mercies; becauſe the original of his revenges he takes from us and our ſins, but the original, and the cauſes of his forgiveneſs he takes from himſelf:* and ſo ſhould we, that we reſtore him that did us wrong to our love again; let it not be wholly, becauſe he hath done all that can be required, but ſomething upon our own account; let our mercy have a ſhare in it; that is, let us accept him readily, receive him quickly, believe him eaſily, expound all things to the better ſenſe, take his word, and receive his repentance, and forgive him at the beginning of it; not to interrupt his repentance, but to encourage it: and that's the proper work of Charity in the preſent Article.

Queſtion IV.—*Whether after every Relapſe muſt the condition of his Pardon be harder than before?*

I anſwer, That I find no difference in the expreſſion of our bleſſed Saviour. It is all one after

ſeven times, and after ſeventy times, and after ſeventy times ſeven times; if he ſhall return, ſaying, I repent, that's all is here required. But then becauſe by ſaying, I repent, is not meant only the ſpeaking it, but alſo doing it; it muſt at leaſt be probable that he does ſo, as well as ſay ſo; therefore although as ſoon as he does ſo, ſo ſoon you muſt forgive him, yet

1. After the firſt forgiveneſs, and at the ſecond and third offence, we are not obliged ſo readily to believe his ſaying, as after the firſt offence; at which time, although he did violence to Juſtice and Charity, yet he had not broken his Faith, as now he hath; and therefore the oftener he hath relapſed, the more ſignifications he ought to give of the truth of his repentance. He that is pardoned, and ſins again, cannot expect ſo eaſily to be acquitted the third time, as at the firſt, ſaith St. *Baſil.* At the firſt fault we muſt believe his ſaying, becauſe we know nothing to the contrary; but when he hath often ſaid ſo, and it is ſeen ſo often that he did not ſay true, he that is forgiven, and then relapſes, is obliged to do more the next time he pretends repentance.

2. Although we are bound to forgive him entirely, even after a thouſand injuries, if he does truly repent; yet this Perſon cannot expect to be employed, or to be returned to all his former capacities of good; becauſe it is plain, he hath not cured the evil principle, the malicious heart, or the evil eye, the ſlanderous tongue, or the unjuſt hand, his covetous deſire, and his peeviſh anger:

and then though we muſt be ready in heart to receive him to all the degrees of his former condition, when he ſhall be capable, and is the ſame man that ought to be employed; yet till he be ſo, or appears ſo in prudent and reaſonable indications, he muſt be pardoned heartily, and prayed for charitably, but he muſt be handled cautiouſly. It muſt not be harder for thee to pardon him after ten thouſand relapſes and returns; but after ſo much variety of folly and weak inſtances, it will be much harder for him to ſay and prove he does repent. But in this, our Charity muſt neither be credulous, nor moroſe; too eaſy, nor too difficult; but it is ſecure, if it pardons him, and prays for him, whether he repents or no.

3. There are ſome ſignifications of repentance, which Charity never can refuſe; but muſt accept the offending Perſon as a Convert and a Penitent.

4. Such is open and plain confeſſion of the fault, with the circumſtances of ſhame and diſhonour; for he that does ſo much rudeneſs to himſelf as to endure the ſhame of his ſin, rather than not to return to duty, gives great teſtimony that he returns in earneſt. And this can no ways be abated, unleſs he have done ſo before; and that his confeſſion is but formal, and his ſhame is paſſed into ſhameleſſneſs. In this caſe we may expect ſome more real Argument.

5. Whatſoever are the great uſual ſigns and expreſſes of repentance before God, thoſe alſo are to be accepted by us when they are done before men; and though we may be deceived in theſe things,

and God cannot, yet they are the beſt we can get, and ſomething we muſt rely upon. And becauſe, like God, we cannot diſcern the hearts of men; yet we rightly follow his example, when we do that which is the next beſt, and expound the action to the beſt and moſt favourable ſenſe of Charity.

6. An Oath, if it be not taken lightly, is a great preſumption of an innocent, a ſincere and repenting Soul. It is the ſign of an ill mind not to truſt him that ſwears ſeldom, and always ſolemnly, and for ought we know, juſtly, ſaid *Amphides*. For a ſolemn ſacred Oath is a double hedge, and it is guarded by a double fear; leſt I abuſe my Friend, and leſt I provoke my God: and the Bleſſed Apoſtle ſaith, *That an Oath is the end of all ſtrife;* meaning, amongſt Perſons who can ceaſe to ſtrive, and can ceaſe to be injurious. It is ſo among them who have Religion, and who can be fit for ſociety. For there is no man whoſe Oath it can be fit to take, but it is alſo fit, that having ſworn, he ſhould be truſted. But it is ſeldom that our Charity can be put to ſuch extremities: and in no converſation can it happen, that a man ſhall do an injury, and repent, and do it again twenty times, and an hundred times in the revolution of a few days. If ſuch things could be, thoſe men are intolerable upon other accounts, and though Charity muſt refuſe no man, and forgiveneſs muſt alway ſtand at your door ready to let in all that knock, yet the accidents of the World, caution and prudence, and innocent fears, will diſpoſe of our affairs in other channels of ſecurity, and cut off the occaſions of ſuch

diſputes; ſo certain is that obſervation of St. *Hierom* which I mentioned before, that we are tied to forgive oftener than our Brother can ſin; but then alſo ſo ſafe are we whoſe Charity muſt be bigger than the greateſt temptation: and yet no temptation is like to happen, but what is leſs than an ordinary Charity.

Queſtion V.—*Whether the injured Perſon be bound to offer peace? Or, may he let it alone, and worthily communicate, if the offending party does not ſeek it?*

To the Queſtion, Whether of the parties muſt begin the peace? I anſwer, that both are bound: For although he that did the injury is bound in conſcience and juſtice to go to him whom he hath injured, and he is not a true penitent if he does not: and he muſt not for his part be accepted to the Communion, of which I am to give account in the Chapter of Repentance; yet becauſe we are now upon the title of Charity, I am to add, that if the criminal does not come, the offended perſon muſt offer peace: he muſt go or ſend to him. If others begin the quarrel, do thou begin the peace, ſaid *Seneca*. For ſometimes the offender deſires pardon, but dares not aſk it, he begs it by interpretation and tacit deſire: conſult therefore with his modeſty, his infirmity, and his ſhame. He is more bound to do it than thou art, yet thou canſt better do it than he can. It is not always ſafe for him; it is never unſafe for thee. It may be an

extreme ſhame to him; it is ever honourable to thee; It may be ſometimes to his loſs, it is always thy gain; for this was the reſolution of *Heſiod's* Riddle, Half is more than the whole; *A dinner of Herbs with peace, is better than a ſtalled Ox with contention*, and therefore upon all accounts it is for thy advantage to make the offer.

I add alſo, it is thy duty. I do not ſay, that in Juſtice thou art bound; but in Charity thou art, and in obedience to thy Lord. *If thy Brother offend thee, go and tell him.* Go thou, ſays Chriſt. For by ſo doing we imitate God, whom though we have ſo often, ſo infinitely offended, yet he thought thoughts of peace, and ſent to us Ambaſſadors of peace, and Miniſters of reconciliation. When *Pompey* and *Marcus Craſſus* were to quit their Conſulſhips, *Cneius Aurelius*, I know not upon what account, ran into the *Forum* and cried out, that *Jupiter* appearing to him in his Dream, commanded that they ſhould be reconciled before they were diſcharged by the People, which when the People alſo required, *Pompey* ſtirred not, but *Craſſus* did; he reached out his hand to his Colleague, ſaying, *I do nothing unworthy of myſelf, O* Romans, *if I firſt offer peace to* Pompey, *whom you honoured with the Title of* Great *before he was a Man, and with a Triumph before he was a Senator.* We cannot want better Arguments of peacefulneſs: It is no ſhame to thee to offer peace to thy offending Brother, when thy God did ſo to thee, who was greatly provoked by thee, and could as greatly have been revenged; and it is no diſparagement

that thou ſhouldeſt deſire the reconcilement with him for whom Chriſt became a Sacrifice, and to whom he offers, as he does to thee, the Communion of his Body and Blood. Thou art (I ſay) *bound* in Charity to thy Brother's Soul, whoſe repentance thou canſt eaſily invite by thy kind offer, and thou makeſt his return eaſy, thou takeſt away his objection and temptation, thou ſecureſt thy own right better, and art inveſted in the greateſt Glory of mankind; thou doſt the work of God, and the work of thy own Soul; thou carrieſt pardon, and eaſe and mercy with thee; and who would not run and ſtrive to be firſt in carrying a pardon, and bringing meſſages of peace and joyfulneſs?

Conſider therefore that death divides with you every minute; you quarrel in the Morning, and it may be you ſhall die at Night; run quickly and be reconciled, for fear your anger laſt longer than your life. It was a pretty victory which *Euclid* got of his angry Brother, who being highly diſpleaſed, cried out, *Let me periſh if I be not revenged:* But he anſwered, *And let me periſh if I do not make you kind, and quickly to forget your anger.* That gentle anſwer did it, and they were friends preſently, and for ever after. It is a ſhame if we be out-done by Heathens, and eſpecially in that Grace which is the ornament and jewel of our Religion, that is, in forgiving our Enemies, in appeaſing anger, in doing good for evil, in returning prayers for curſings, and gentle uſages for rude treatments: this is the Glory of Chriſtianity, as Chriſtianity is the Glory of the World. I end this with the ad-

vice of St. *Bernard*. *Let every man who deſires to come worthily to the Sacrament of peace, the Communion of Chriſt's Body, for the wrong that he does be ready to aſk pardon, and for the wrong that he receives be ready to give pardon, and ſo Chriſt's members will be in peace.*

Queſtion VI.—*Whether the Precept of Forgiveneſs, and the Charity of the Communion, muſt of neceſſity put a period to all Law-ſuits?*

To this I anſwer, that Suits at Law in matters criminal, relating to injuries done or ſuffered, are ſo often mingled with intereſts of anger and revenge, they are ſo often conducted violently and paſſionately, that he who forbids anger and revenge, does alſo in effect forbid Suits of Law upon the account of injuries received. But this is to be underſtood only of ſuch petitions of right, or vindications of wrong, as cannot or will not be ſeparated from Revenge. Thus if the Law which God gave to *Moſes* in the matter of injuries, were the meaſure of our Judicatories, *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, it were not lawful to go to Law to get his eye put out, that had extinguiſhed mine: for this does not repair me, but only afflicts him. A Wolf is in nature leſs hateful than a Viper; he wounds that he may drink the blood, and kills that he may eat: but the Viper ſmites that he may kill, and gets nothing by it. So is every Law-ſuit that vexes one, and repairs no man. But the rules and meaſures of conſcience in this particular, are briefly theſe.

1. If the injury be tranſient, and paſſes away in the act; it is not lawful for a Chriſtian to go to Law, becauſe he cannot *reſcind the act*, and he cannot *repair himſelf*, and that which remains is nothing but revenge, which can never conſiſt with charity.

2. The caſe is the ſame, if the injury be permanent, but irremediable; for if nothing can be reſcinded, if no amends can be made, it is but a fantaſtic pleaſure to delight in the affliction of him that injured me. If cutting off his arm would make mine grow; if ſtriking him upon the face would bring me a new tooth inſtead of that which he ſtruck out of mine; then there might be a juſt cauſe of going to Law; but when the evil remains after all that the Law can do, it is enough that I loſt a limb, I will not loſe my Charity, which is left me to make amends to me, and to procure a bleſſing to make me reparation. If by my arm I got my living, it is fit that he that cut my arm off ſhould give me maintenance; becauſe he can repair my loſs of livelihood, though he can never reſtore my arm; and to cauſe him to be barely afflicted for my affliction, when I am not relieved by his affliction, is barbariſm, and a rude uncharitableneſs. To revenge, is but the more excuſable way of doing injury. Nay, *Maximus Tyrius* ſays, it is worſe; the revenging man is worſe than the injurious; and therefore to proſecute him in Law who did me wrong, and cannot now amend me, is but uncharitableneſs acted under the Viſor of Authority; ſo *Mithridates* affirmed, that uſually men

carry Arms againſt a Thief, for revenge as much as for their ſecurity: it is in many caſes nothing elſe but revenge.

3. He that hath received an injury muſt not revenge himſelf by going to Law, though with a purpoſe to prevent another injury that is tolerable and inconſiderable. The reaſon is, becauſe if he fears an evil that is but little, the ſmallneſs of the evil, and the uncertainty of its event are not conſiderable, if compared to the evil of revenge that is included, to the trouble of the Suit, to the evil of our Brother's puniſhment, to his ſhame and to his ſmart, to his expenſe and his diſorder; and the Charity of forgiveneſs ſhall never have a proper ſeaſon for his exerciſe, or an opportunity to get a reward, if every excuſe and every degree of temptation, or ſeeming warranty, can legitimate that action which is more like a revenge, than it can be to prudence, and a reaſonable caution.

All quarrellings and contentions at Law for little matters, are Arguments of impatience, of a peeviſh ſpirit, and an uncharitable mind. He is a very miſerable man that is unquiet when a Mouſe runs over his ſhoe, or a Fly does kiſs his cheek. *Whatſoever is little and tolerable muſt be let alone*, ſaid *Ariſtides*; and *Apollonius* anſwered, *That Wars muſt not be undertaken for great cauſes, nor Suits at Law for little ones*. There is in ſuch Perſons who run to Courts, and complain for every ſmall offence, ſuch a ſtock of anger and peeviſhneſs, and ſuch a ſpirit of fire within them, that every breath and every motion from without can put it into a flame;

and the Devil will never be wanting to miniſter occaſions to ſuch prepared materials. It is told in the Annals of *France*, that when the Kings of *England* and *France*, in a deadly war, had their Armies ready to join Battle; the French Officers having felt the force of the Engliſh valour, were not willing to venture the hazard of a Battle, and perſuaded their King to offer conditions of peace. The Treaty was accepted, and the two Kings withdrew into an old Chapel in the Field; where, when they had diſcourſed themſelves into kindneſs, they reſolved to part friends, and to appoint Commiſſioners to finiſh the Treaty. But as they were going out, a great Serpent iſſued out of the ruinous wall, and made toward the Kings, who being affrighted with the danger, drew their ſwords, and in that manner ran out of the Chapel. Their Guards, who in equal numbers attended at the door, ſeeing their Princes in a fright, and with their ſwords drawn, ſuppoſed they were fighting, and without any ſign, inſtantly drew upon each other; which alarm the two Armies taking inſtantly engaged in a bloody fight, and could not for all the power of their Kings be totally diſengaged till the night parted them. Juſt ſuch is the danger of an angry and quarrelſome ſpirit; he hath his ſword by his ſide, and his Army in the Field, his hand is up, and his heart is ready, and he wants nothing but an occaſion, a Serpent to ſet him on; and that will never be wanting, as long as the old Serpent the Devil hath any malice or any power. But let us not deceive ourſelves: we are bound

very far by the Laws of Charity to the Soul of our Brother, and we are very much concerned that he be ſaved, and therefore our Bleſſed Saviour commanded us, *if our Brother have ſinned againſt us, to reprove him;* not preſently to hale him to the Judge, or deliver him up to the Law; but to uſe means and charitable Inſtruments, not for his vexation, but his converſion. And he little regards his Brother's Soul, who by Suits of Law and arts of affliction, provokes him to more anger, or hardens him in his ſin, or hinders his repentance, or vexes him into impatience.

But to return to the particular caſe. The preventing of every evil is not a ſufficient pretence (though it were true) to commence a Suit at Law. For when our Bleſſed Saviour commands us to reprove our offending Brother, he ſpeaks of ſuch a one as is ſtill in wrong, and the ſtate of injuſtice, a Perſon from whom we are not ſure but we may receive another injury; and yet even to this Perſon we are commanded to be charitable in our reproof and private admonition, but are not permitted to be quick and fierce in our complaints at Law. For it is not diſhonourable, if a wiſe man be railed at, be ſmitten, be cheated, be derided by Fools, and evil perſons: but to do any thing of this again, that is inhumane and inglorious. But this caſe is fully determined even by a Heathen: *You muſt not return evil to your Enemy, although we be in danger to ſuffer a greater miſchief;* and therefore not vex him at Law. For that is the defence of Beaſts, who cannot keep themſelves harmleſs,

but by doing a greater miſchief: a tooth or a claw, a horn or a heel, theſe defend the Beaſt, who, that he may not receive a wound, defends himſelf ſo, that he will kill his Enemy. And yet *this* amongſt evil men is called *prudent*.

It is not by this diſcourſe intended, that we may not take ſecurities of him againſt future miſchiefs, if we can do it without doing him a miſchief; but under the colour of ſecuring ourſelves for the future, we muſt not be revenged for what is paſt; neither muſt our revenge in ſmall matters be uſed at all as an inſtrument of our ſecurity. If we can be ſecured without this affliction, we muſt take that way to be ſecured; but if by revenges and direct inflictions of evil, or procurations of puniſhment, we attempt it, we are not charitable. And this is the perfect meaning of our Bleſſed Saviour, *If thine Enemy take thy Cloak, let him take thy Coat alſo; and if he ſtrike thee on thy right cheek, turn thy left to him,* and let him ſtrike thee again. Theſe words are not to be underſtood literally and preciſely; not ſo as to forbid all ſecurities or avoiding of future evils; for Chriſt himſelf did not ſo when an evil Servant ſmote him; and St. *Paul* did not ſo, when the High Prieſt commanded him to be ſmitten on the face; they neither of them received it ſilently, nor turned the other cheek. And what if he that ſmote one cheek will ſmite no more? or will ſmite the ſame? How if we are not able to bear a ſecond blow? Or how if the offering the other cheek provoke thy Enemy to ſcorn thee, and tempt or provoke him to ſtrike thee, who intended

no ſuch ſecond blow? And were it not evidently better to withdraw from him that ſmites? or to ſweeten him with gentle language? It is therefore *certain*, theſe *words* are to be underſtood in the *ſenſe* of Prudence, Equity, and Charity; that is, when you are injured, you may uſe all that is for your innocent defence, and unmingled guards, you may without all peradventure pray him to be quiet, you may give him Reaſons and Arguments to let you alone, you may give good words, you may give *bleſſing for curſing*, that's certainly permitted; or you may run away, you may *flee from City to City;* or you may complain to him; you may reprove him, and expoſtulate the injury with him, as Chriſt did, and as did St. *Paul*. But what is then meant by turning the other Cheek? Our bleſſed Saviour uſing an Idiom of his own Language, and a Phraſe uſed by the Prophet in the Prediction of Chriſt's meekneſs and Paſſion, *He turned his cheeks to the nippers*, means, that we muſt not reſiſt with doing violence or affliction to him that ſmites; any innocent guard, but nothing violent; any thing that is harmleſs, but nothing vexatious, but rather than do another an evil, ſuffer another; and this evidently demonſtrates, that the preventing of every injury, is no ſufficient warrant to legitimate the bringing of our Enemy to be puniſhed at Law for what is paſt. The ſum is this.

No man is forbidden to lock his doors, to bar his windows, or to run from evil, or to divert it, or to reprove it. But, 1. In this queſtion we ſpeak of evil already done, and againſt revenges, not

againſt defences; for that which is done, cannot be undone, and therefore revenge is fooliſh and malicious: but that which is not done, may be prevented by all arts of gentleneſs and innocence; and therefore defences are prudent, and they are lawful. 2. We ſpeak here of little dangers and tolerable evils; and a man muſt not go to Law becauſe the Muſician keeps falſe time with his foot, it is not for a ſmall matter that a man muſt diſquiet his Brother; he muſt rather ſuffer two, than do one evil.

4. But if the evil we fear be intolerable, and yet certain, or very probable to happen, we may appeal to the Law for ſanctuary or defence, though this appeal do procure affliction to our Enemy; always provided, that this evil be not directly intended, not deſired ſecretly, nor delighted in when it happens, and be made as little as it can, proſecuted with as eaſy circumſtances, without vexatious meaſures, but not without neceſſity.

For in all intercourſes with our Enemy, there are but two things to be conſidered by us: how we may do him good, how we may keep ourſelves from evil. The latter, the Law of Charity, and collateral Duties do permit or enjoin reſpectively; but of the former our Bleſſed Saviour hath made ſpecial proviſion. For when our Bleſſed Lord commanded us firſt to reprove ſecretly our offending Brother, and then before witneſs, if there be need; the reaſon he gives, is only that we may bring him to repentance, that you may gain him by reſcuing his Soul from guiltineſs, and his ac-

tions from Injuriouſneſs. If this courſe will not prevail, then tell it to the Church; complain of him publicly, bring him before the Chriſtian Judicatories; but ſtill that he may repent; for if he repents, he muſt be thy Brother ſtill, loved as dearly, treated as friendly, careſſed as ſweetly, handled as tenderly, converſed with as obligingly. But if none of all this will prevail for his good, then look you only to the other part of the permiſſion; that is, that you be ſecured from this evil; you have done all that you are tied to do for his repentance in this method, but you have not yet done all that you are tied to do in charity; for ſtill you muſt afford him all thoſe kindneſſes, which Chriſt requires of thee for thy Enemy; that is, to pray for him, and to love him. But you may ſecure yourſelf by all means, which his violence and your caſe hath made neceſſary.

But this, I ſay, is in caſe the evil be intolerable, or that to avoid it be a matter of duty, or charity to thoſe to whom you are obliged. Though my old Friend, and my new Enemy *Carbo*, do me little ſpites, and kill my Deer, or ſhoot Pigeons, or treſpaſs upon my Graſs, I muſt not be avenged on him at the Law or right myſelf, by afflicting him, but ſtrive for the rewards of patience, and labour for the fruits of my charity, and for the reſt, uſe all the guards of prudence that I can: yet if he takes away my Children's portions, or fires my houſes, or expoſes me or mine to beggary or deſtruction, I muſt do that duty which my charity to my Children, and my juſtice does oblige me: I

may defend my Children's right, though that defence expoſes him to evil that does the evil. I may not let *Carbo* alone, and ſuffer my Children to be undone. I muſt provide for my own according to their condition and ſtates of life; if this proviſion be but neceſſary or competent, according to prudent, modeſt, and wiſe accounts, and be not a contention for exceſſes and extravagancies of Wealth. He that goes to Law for another, hath greater warrant than he that does it for himſelf; for it is more likely to be Charity in that caſe, and Revenge in my own; and certainly in the diſputes of Charity, our Children are to be preferred before our Enemies.

In ſhort, If the vexation that is brought by the Suit of Law upon an injurious Perſon be not revenge, and if the defence be neceſſary, or greatly charitable, and if the injury be intolerable or greatly afflictive, in theſe caſes Chriſt hath left us to the liberties of Nature, and Reaſon, and the Laws.

5. No man muſt in his own caſe proſecute his Enemy to death or capital puniſhment. The Reaſons are, becauſe no man's temporal evil, his injury, his diſgrace, his money, and his wound, are not the competent value for the life of a man, and when beyond this, there is no evil that we can do, it can in no ſenſe conſiſt with Charity that goes ſo far. He that proſecutes his Enemy to death, forgives nothing, forbears nothing of that injury; he means no good to his Enemy, deſires not his amendment, is not careful of his repentance, is not ambitious to

gain a Brother, to ſecure the intereſt of a Soul for God, to get himſelf the rewards of Charity; and it is a ſad thing to make thy Adverſary pay the utmoſt farthing, even whilſt he is in the way, and to ſend him to make his accounts to God reeking in his ſins, and his crimes broad blown about his ears. There are not many caſes in which it can conſiſt with the ſpirit of *Chriſtianity*, for the Laws themſelves to put a Criminal haſtily to death. Whatſoever is neceſſary, that is lawful; and of the neceſſities of the Public, public Perſons are to judge; only they are to judge according to the *Analogy* and *gentleneſs* of the Chriſtian Laws, by a Chriſtian Spirit, and to take care of Souls, as well as of Bodies and Eſtates. If the Criminal can be amended, as oftentimes he can, it is much better for a Commonwealth, that a good Citizen be made, than that he be taken away while he is evil. *Strabo* tells of ſome Nations dwelling about *Caucaſus*, that never put their greateſt Malefactors to death: and *Diodorus* ſays, *That* Sabacon, *a pious and good King of* Egypt, *changed capital puniſhment into a ſlavery, and profitable works, and that with excellent ſucceſs, becauſe it brought more profit to the Public, and brought the Criminal to repentance and a good mind.* *Balſamo* ſays, Greek Emperors did ſo; and St. *Auguſtine* adviſes it as moſt fitting to be done.

But if this in ſome caſe be better in the Public itſelf, it is neceſſary in the Private, and it is neceſſary in our preſent enquiry, in order to Charity *preparatory* to the holy Communion; and in the Council of *Eliberis* there is a Canon, *If any Chriſ-*

*tian accuſe another at the Law, and proſecute him to baniſhment or death, let him not be admitted to the Communion, no not ſo much as in the Article of death.* For he whoſe malice paſſed unto the death of his Brother, muſt not in his death receive the Communion of the faithful and the Seal of the Charities of God. But this was ſevere, and it is to be underſtood only to be ſo, when we are commanded to proſecute a Criminal, by the intereſt of neceſſary Juſtice, and public Charity, and the command of the Laws; But in other caſes, he that hath done ſo, let him repent greatly, and long, and at laſt communicate: That's the beſt expedient.

Queſtion VII.—*Whether the Laws of Forgiveneſs, and the Charities of the Communion, oblige the injured Perſon to forgive the adulterous Huſband or Wife if they do repent?*

There are two caſes in which it is ſo far from being neceſſary, that it is not lawful to do ſome things of kindneſs, which in all other caſes are indeed true Charity, and highly ſignificative of a Soul truly merciful, and worthy to communicate.

1. When to retain the adulterous Perſon is ſcandalous (as in the Primitive Church it was eſteemed ſo in Clergymen), then ſuch Perſons, though they be penitent, muſt not be ſuffered to cohabit; they muſt be pardoned to all purpoſes which are not made unlawful by accident, and to all purpoſes which may miniſter unto their Repentance and Salvation; but Charity muſt not be done to a ſin-

gle Perſon, with offence to the Church; and a Criminal muſt not receive advantage by the prejudice of the holy and the innocent. Againſt this I have nothing to oppoſe, but that thoſe Churches which did forbid this forgiveneſs, upon pretence of ſcandal, ſhould alſo have conſidered, whether or no that the forgiveneſs of the Criminal, and the charitable toleration of the injury, and the patient labours of love, and the endeavours of repentance be not only more profitable to them both, but alſo more exemplar to others.

2. The other is the caſe of direct danger; if the ſin of the offending party be promoted by the Charity of the injured Man or Woman, it is made unlawful ſo far to forgive, as to cohabit; if this Charity will let her looſe to repent of her Repentance, it turns to uncharitableneſs, and can never be a Duty.

But except it be in theſe caſes, it is not only lawful, but infinitely agreeable to the duty of Charity, to reſtore the repenting Perſon to his firſt condition of love and ſociety. But this is ſuch a Charity, as although it be a counſel of perfection, and a nobleneſs of forgiveneſs, yet that the forgiveneſs ſhall extend to ſociety and mutual endearments of cohabitation, is under no Commandment; becauſe the union of Marriage being broken by the Adultery, that which only remains of obligation, is the Charities of a Chriſtian to a Chriſtian, without the relation of Huſband and Wife. The firſt muſt be kept in the height of Chriſtian dearneſs and communion; but if the ſecond can miniſ-

ter to the good of Souls, it is an Heroic Charity to do it; but in this there ought to be no ſnare, for there is no Commandment.

To the anſwers given to theſe Caſes of Conſcience, I am to add this caution: That although theſe caſes are only the enquiries and concerns of private Perſons; and do not oblige Princes, Parents, Judges, Lords of Servants, in their public capacity, and they may juſtly puniſh the Offender though the injury be done againſt themſelves, yet in theſe caſes the puniſhment muſt be no other than as the Lancet, or the Cupping-glaſs, as faſting, or ill taſting drugs; they are painful, but are alſo wholly given as miniſtries of health. For ſo ſometimes we put crooked ſticks into the fire, we bow, and beat, and twiſt them, not to break, but to make them ſtraight and uſeful. So we correct the evil inclinations of our Children, and the intolerable manners of our Servants, by afflictions of the Body, and griefs of the Mind: all is well, ſo long as it is neceſſary, and ſo long as it is charitable. I remember, that when *Auguſtus* was to give Sentence upon a Son that would have killed his Father, he did not, according to the ſeverity of the Laws, command him to be tied in a Sack, with a Cock, a Serpent, and an Ape, and thrown into *Tiber;* but only to be baniſhed whither his Father pleaſed: remembering, that although the Son deſerved the worſt, yet Fathers loved to inflict the leaſt; and although in Nature, none ought to drink but the hungry and thirſty, yet in Judicatories none ought to puniſh, but they that neither

hunger nor thirſt; becauſe they that do it againſt their wills, exceed not the meaſures of Charity and Neceſſity. But both Fathers and Princes, Judges, and Maſters, have their limits and meaſures before they ſmite, and other meaſures to be obſerved when they do ſmite. *O Chriſtian Judge, do the office of a pious Father*, ſaid St. *Auſtin* to Count *Marcellinus*. A man ſhould not uſe a man prodigally, but be as ſparing of another man's blood as of his own. Puniſh the ſinner, pity the man.

But to conclude theſe enquiries fully. It is very conſiderable, that in many caſes, even when it is lawful to bring a Criminal to puniſhment, or to go to Law, and that it is juſt ſo to do; yet, this whole diſpute being a queſtion of Charity, we are to go by other meaſures than in the other; and when in theſe caſes we do nothing but what is juſt, we muſt remember, that we are Chriſtians, and muſt never expect to go to Heaven, unleſs we do alſo what is charitable.

Therefore enquire no more into how much is juſt and lawful in theſe caſes; but what is charitable, and what is beſt, and what is ſafeſt; for then the caſes of Conſcience are beſt determined, when our reward ſhall alſo greatly be ſecured. For it is in theſe enquiries of Charity in order to the Holy Communion, as it is in the Communion itſelf. Not every one ſhall periſh that does not receive the Holy Communion; but yet to receive it, is of great advantage to our Souls, in order to our obtaining the Joys of Heaven: ſo is every expreſſion of Charity; that every action, which in ſome caſes

may be ſafely omitted, may in all caſes, where there is not a contradicting Duty, be done with great advantages. For he that thinks to have the reward and the Heaven of Chriſtians, by the actions of Juſtice, and the omiſſions of Charity, is like him, who worſhips the Image of the Sun, while at the ſame time he turns his back upon the Sun himſelf. This is ſo eſſentially reaſonable, that even the Heathens knew it, and urged it as a Duty to be obſerved in all their Sacrifices and Solemnities. *When you pray to God* (ſaid one of their own Prophets) *and offer a holy Cloud of Frankincenſe, come not to the gentle Deity with ungentle hearts and hands: for God is of the ſame cognation or kindred with a good man; gentle as a man, apt to pity, apt to do good; juſt, as we ought to be, but infinitely more than we are: and therefore he that is not good, cannot partake with him who is eſſentially and unalterably ſo.*

*Peter Comeſtor* tells of an old Opinion and Tradition of the Ancients, That forty years before the Day of Judgment, the Bow which God placed in the Clouds, ſhall not be ſeen at all: meaning, that ſince the Rainbow was placed there, as a Sign of Mercy and reconcilement, when the Sacrament of Mercy and Peace ſhall diſappear, then God will come to judge the World in Fire, and an intolerable Tempeſt, in which all the uncharitable unforgiving Perſons, ſhall for ever be confounded.

Remember always what the Holy Jeſus hath done for thee: I ſhall repreſent it in the Words of St. *Bernard: O Bleſſed Jeſus, we have heard ſtrange things of thee. All the World tells us ſuch*

*things of thee, that muſt needs make us to run after thee. They ſay, that thou deſpiſeſt not the poor, nor refuſeſt the returning ſinner. We are told that thou didſt pardon the Thief, when he confeſſed his ſin, and confeſſed thee, and* Mary Magdalen *when ſhe wept; and didſt accept the* Syrophœnician *when ſhe prayed; and wouldſt not give Sentence of Condemnation upon the Woman taken in Adultery, even becauſe ſhe looked ſadly, and was truly aſhamed: thou didſt not reject him that ſate at the Receipt of Cuſtom, nor the humble Publican, nor the Diſciple that denied thee, nor them that perſecuted thy Diſciples, no, not them that crucified thee. Theſe are thy precious Ointments, apt with their ſweetneſs to allure all the World after thee, and with their virtue to heal them. After thee and thy ſweet Odours, O Bleſſed Jeſu, we will run.* Happy is he that ſays ſo, and does ſo; enkindling his Charity in the Blood of Chriſt (as St. *Ignatius's* expreſſion is), tranſcribing his Example into our Converſation, for we can no way pleaſe him, but by being like him: and in the Bleſſings of Chriſt, and in the Communion of his Body and Blood, the uncharitable and revenging man ſhall never have a portion.

SECTION V.—*Devotions relative to this Grace of Charity; to be uſed by way of Exerciſe and Preparation to the Divine Myſteries, in any time or part of our Life; but eſpecially before and at the Communion.*

## The Hymn, containing Acts of Love to God and to our Neighbour.

*COME, behold the Works of the Lord: what deſolations he hath made in the Earth.*

*He maketh Wars to ceaſe unto the ends of the Earth; he breaketh the Bow, and cutteth the Spear in ſunder, he burneth the Chariot in the fire.*

*But unto the wicked, ſaid God, what haſt thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou ſhouldſt take my Covenant in thy mouth, ſeeing thou hateſt Inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee?*

*Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy Brother; thou ſlandereſt thine own Mother's Son.*

*Theſe things thou haſt done, and I kept ſilence; but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes.*

*Now conſider this, ye that forget God; leſt I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

*Deliver me from blood-guiltineſs, O God, thou God of my ſalvation; and my tongue ſhall ſing aloud of thy righteouſneſs.*

*Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble.*

*The Lord will deliver him and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth; and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*

*The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing: thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs.*

*But I ſaid, Lord, be merciful to me: heal my Soul, for I have ſinned againſt thee.*

*Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindneſs in the day time, and in the night his ſong ſhall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.*

*O ſend out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy Hill, and to thy Tabernacles.*

*Then will I go unto the Altar of God, my exceeding joy: yea, upon the Harp will I praiſe thee, O God, my God.*

*The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and ſhall truſt in him; and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.*

*Do good, O Lord, to them that are true of heart, and evermore mightily defend them. Do good in thy good pleaſure unto Sion, build thou the walls of Jeruſalem.*

*In God will I praiſe his word: in the Lord will I praiſe his word: Thy vows are upon me, O God, I will render praiſes unto thee.*

*For thou haſt delivered our ſouls from death, wilt thou not deliver our feet from falling, that we may walk before God in the light of the living?*

*I will love thee, O God, and praiſe thee for ever, becauſe thou haſt done it; and I will wait on thy name, for it is good before the Saints.*

Glory be to the Father, *&c.*

## A Prayer for the Grace of Charity, &c.

*O moſt gentle, moſt merciful and gracious Saviour Jeſus, thou didſt take upon thee our nature, to redeem us from ſin and miſery: thou wert for us led as a Lamb to the ſlaughter: and as a Sheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo thou openedſt not thy mouth, thou turnedſt thy back to the ſmiters, and thy cheeks to the nippers, thou wert mocked and whipped, crucified and torn, but thou didſt nothing but good to thy enemies, and prayedſt with loud cries for thy perſecutors, and didſt heal the wound of one that came to lay violent hands upon thee; O plant in my heart gentleneſs and patience, a meek and a long-ſuffering ſpirit, that I may never be tranſported with violent angers, never be diſordered by peeviſhneſs, never think thoughts of revenge; but may with meekneſs receive all injuries that ſhall be done to me, and patiently bear every croſs accident, and with charity may return bleſſing for curſing, good for evil, kind words for foul reproaches, loving admonitions for ſcornful upbraidings, gentle treatments for all deriſions and affronts; that living all my days with meekneſs and charity, keeping peace with all men, and loving my neighbour as myſelf, and thee more than myſelf, and more than all the world, I may at laſt come into the regions of peace and eternal charity, where thou liveſt, who loveſt all men, and wouldſt have none to periſh, but all men to be ſaved through thee, O moſt merciful Saviour and Redeemer Jeſu,* Amen.

An act of forgiveneſs to be ſaid with all earneſtneſs and ſincerity before every Communion.

*O God, my God, I have ſinned grievouſly againſt thee: I am thy debtor in a vaſt and an eternal debt, and if thou ſhouldeſt take the forfeiture, I ſhall be for ever bound in eternal priſons, even till I pay the utmoſt farthing: But I hope in thy mercies, that thou wilt forgive me my ten thouſand Talents; and I alſo do in thy preſence forgive every one that hath offended me; whoever hath taken my goods privately and injurioufly, or hurt my perſon, or contrived any evil againſt me, whether known or unknown; whoever hath leſſened my reputation, detracted from my beſt endeavours, or hath ſlandered me, or reproached, reviled, or in any word or way done me injury; I do from the bottom of my ſoul forgive him; praying thee alſo, that thou wilt never impute to him any word, or thought, or action done againſt me; but forgive him, as I deſire thou wouldſt alſo forgive me all that I have ſinned againſt thee, or any man in the world. Give him thy grace, and a holy repentance for whatever he hath done amiſs; grant he may do ſo no more: keep me from the evil tongues and injurious actions of all men, and keep all my enemies from all the expreſſes of thy wrath: and let thy grace prevail finally upon thy ſervant, that I may never remember any injury, to the prejudice of any man, but that I may walk towards my enemies, as Chriſt did, who received much evil, but went about ſeeking to do good to every*

*man: and if ever it ſhall be in my power, and my opportunity, to return evil; O then grant, that the ſpirit of love and forgiveneſs may triumph over all anger, and malice, and revenge; that I may be the Son of God, and may love God, and prove my love to thee, by my love to my Brother, and by obedience to all thy Laws, through the Son of thy love, by whom thou art reconciled to mankind, our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus.* Amen.

Verſ. *Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our fore-fathers, neither take thou vengeance of our ſins.*

Reſp. *Spare us, good Lord, ſpare thy people whom thou haſt redeemed with thy moſt precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.* Amen.

## CHAPTER V.

*Of Repentance, preparatory to the Bleſſed Sacrament.*

### Section I.

*WHEN* Iſaac *and* Abimelech *had made a covenant of peace and mutual agreement, they would not confirm it by a Sacramental Oath till the next morning, that they might ſwear faſting, for the reverence and religious regard of the ſolemn Oath* (ſaith *Lyra*). But *Philo* ſays, they did it Symbolically, to repreſent that purity and cleanneſs of Soul, which he that ſwears to God, or comes to pay his vows, ought to preſerve with great Religion. He that in a religious and ſolemn addreſs comes to God, ought to conſider whether his body be free from uncleanneſs, and his ſoul from vile affections. *He that is righteous, let him be righteous ſtill; and he that is juſtified, let him be juſtified*, yet more, ſaith the Spirit of God: and then it follows, *He that thirſts, let him come and drink of the living waters freely, and without money*, meaning that when our affections to ſin are gone, when our hearts are clean, then we may freely partake of the Feaſt of the Supper of the Lamb.

For as in natural forms, the more noble they are, the more noble diſpoſitions are required to their production; ſo it is in the ſpiritual: for when Chriſt is to be efformed in us, when we are to become the ſons of God, fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone, we muſt be waſhed in water, and purified by faith, and ſanctified by the Spirit, and cleanſed by an excellent repentance; we muſt be confirmed by a holy hope, and ſoftened by charity. So God hath ordered in the excellent fabric of human bodies: Firſt, our meat is prepared by fire, then macerated by the teeth, then digeſted in the ſtomach, where the firſt ſeparation is made of the good from the bad, the wholeſome juices from the more earthy parts; theſe being ſent down to earth, the other are conveyed to the Liver, where the matter is ſeparated again, and the good is turned into blood, and the better into ſpirits; and thence the body is ſupplied with blood, and the ſpirits repair into the heart and head, and thence they may be ſent on Embaſſies for the miniſtries of the body, and for the work of underſtanding. So it is in the diſpenſation of the affairs of the ſoul: The ear which is the mouth of the ſoul, receives all meat, and the ſenſes entertain the fuel for all paſſions, and all intereſts of virtue and vice. But the underſtanding makes the firſt ſeparation, dividing the clean from the unclean: But when the Spirit of God comes and purifies even the ſeparate matter, making that which is morally good to be ſpiritual and holy, firſt cleanſing us from the ſenſualities of fleſh and blood, and then from ſpiritual

iniquities that uſually debauch the ſoul; then the holy nouriſhment which we receive, paſſes into divine excellencies. But if ſenſuality be in the palate, and intemperance in the ſtomach; if luſt be in the liver, and anger in the heart, it corrupts the holy food, and makes that to be a ſavour of death, which was intended for health and holy bleſſings.

But therefore when we have lived in the corrupted air of evil company, and have ſucked in the vile juices of Coloquintida, and the deadly Henbane; when that is within the heart which defiles the man, the ſoul muſt be purged by repentance, it muſt be waſhed by tears, and purified by penitential ſorrow. For he that comes to this holy Feaſt with an unrepenting heart, is like the flies in the Temple upon the day of Sacrifice: the little inſect is very buſy about the fleſh of the ſlain beaſts; ſhe flies to every corner of the Temple; and ſhe taſtes the fleſh, before the portion is laid before the God: but when the nidour and the delicacy hath called ſuch an unwelcome gueſt, ſhe corrupts the Sacrifice, and therefore dies at the Altar, or is driven away by the officious Prieſt. So is an unworthy Communicant; he comes, it may be, with paſſion, and an earneſt zeal, he hopes to be fed, and he hopes to be made immortal; he thinks he does a holy action, and ſhall receive a holy bleſſing; but what is his portion? It is a glorious thing to be feaſted at the Table of God; glorious to him that is invited and prepared, but not to him that is unprepared, hateful, and impenitent.

But it is an eaſy thing to ſay, that a man muſt repent before he communicates, ſo he muſt before he prays, before he dies, before he goes a journey, the whole life of a man is to be a continual repentance; but if ſo, then what particular is that which is required before we receive the holy Communion? For if it be an univerſal duty of infinite extent, or unlimited comprehenſion, then every Chriſtian muſt always be doing ſome of the offices of repentance: But then, which are the peculiar parts and offices of this grace, which have any ſpecial and immediate relation to this ſolemnity? For if there be none, the Sermons of repentance are nothing but the general doctrine of good life, but of no ſpecial efficacy in our preparation.

The Anſwer to this will explicate the intricacy, and eſtabliſh the meaſures of our duty in this proper relation, in order to this miniſtry.

## Section II.—*The neceſſity of Repentance in order to the holy Sacrament.*

THE holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper does not produce its intended effect upon an unprepared ſubject. He that gives his body to that which is againſt the ſpirit, and his ſpirit to the affections of the body, cannot receive the body of Chriſt in a ſpiritual manner. He that receives Chriſt, muſt in great truth be a ſervant of Chriſt. *It is not lawful* (ſaith *Juſtin Martyr*) *for*

*any one to receive the holy Euchariſtical bread, and to drink of the ſacred Chalice, but to him that believes, and to him that lives according to Chriſt's commandment.* For as St. *Paul* argues of the infinite undecency of fornication, becauſe it is a making the members of Chriſt to become the members of an harlot: upon the ſame account, it is infinitely impoſſible that any ſuch polluted perſons ſhould become the members of Chriſt, to the intents of bleſſing and the ſpirit. How can Chriſt's body be communicated to them, who are one fleſh with an harlot? and ſo it is in all other ſins: *We cannot partake of the Lord's table, and the table of devils.* A wicked perſon, and a *Communicant*, are of contrary intereſts, of differing relations, deſigned to divers ends, fitted with other diſpoſitions; they work not by the ſame principles, are not weighed in the ſame balance or meted by like meaſures: and therefore they that come, muſt be innocent, or return to innocence; that is, they muſt repent, or be ſuch perſons as need no repentance: And St. *Ambroſe* gives this account of the practice of the Church in this affair. *This is the order of this myſtery which is everywhere obſerved, that firſt by the pardon of our ſins our ſouls be healed, and the wounds cured with the medicine of repentance, and then that our ſouls be plentifully nouriſhed by this holy Sacrament;* and to this purpoſe he expounds the parable of the prodigal ſon, ſaying, *that no man ought to come to this Sacrament unleſs he have the wedding-ring and the wedding-garment;* unleſs he have received the ſeal of the Spirit, and is clothed with white

garments, the righteouſneſs and juſtification of the Saints. And to the ſame purpoſe it is, that St. *Cyprian* complains of ſome in his Church, who not having repented, not being put under diſcipline by the Biſhop and the Clergy, yet had the Sacrament miniſtered to them; againſt whom he preſſes the ſevere words of St. *Paul*, *He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himſelf;* that is, he that repents not of his ſins before he comes to the holy Sacrament, comes before he is prepared, and therefore before he ſhould: and St. *Baſil* hath a whole Chapter on purpoſe to prove *that it is not ſafe for any man, that is not purged from all pollution of fleſh and ſpirit, to eat the body of the Lord;* and that is the title of the Chapter: The wicked think to appeaſe God with rivers of oil, and hecatombs of oxen, and with flocks of ſheep: they think by the ceremony and the gift to make peace with God; to get pardon for their Sin, and to make way for more: but they loſe their labour (ſays the Comedy) and throw away their coſt, becauſe God accepts no breakers of their Vows; he loves no man's ſacrifice, that does not truly love his ſervice: what if you empty all the *Mævanian* valleys, and drive the fat Lambs in flocks unto the Altars? what if you ſacrifice a herd of white Bulls from *Clitumnus?* One ſacrifice of a troubled ſpirit, one offering of a broken heart, is a better oblation, than all the wealth which the fields of the wicked can produce. *God by the Forms and Rites of Sacrifice teaches us how to come to the Altars, whether for Prayer or Euchariſt; we muſt be ſure to bring no*

*evil paſſion, no ſpiritual diſeaſe along with us*, ſaith *Philo*. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the Chriſtian Sacrifice; and though the Lamb of God is repreſented in a pure Oblation, yet we muſt bring ſomething of our own: our luſts muſt be crucified, our paſſions brought in fetters, bound in chains, and laid down at the foot of the throne of God. We muſt uſe our ſin, as the Aſſes' firſt Colt was to be uſed among the Jews; there is no redeeming of it, but only by the breaking of its neck: and when a ſinner comes to God groaning under his load, carrying the dead body of his luſts, and laying them before the Altar of God, ſaying, *This is my pride that almoſt ruined me: here is the corpſe of my luſts, they are now dead, and as carcaſſes are more heavy than living bodies, ſo now my ſin feels more ponderous, becauſe it is mortified: I now feel the intolerable burden, and I cannot bear it.* When a ſinner makes this addreſs to God, coming with a penitential ſoul, with a holy ſorrow, and with holy purpoſes, then no oblation ſhall be more pleaſing, no gueſt more welcome, no ſacrifice more accepted. The Sacrament is like the Word of God; if you receive it worthily, it will do you good, if unworthily, it will be your death and your deſtruction. Here the penitent can be cleanſed, and here the impenitent are conſumed: here they that are juſtified, ſhall be juſtified ſtill, and they that are unholy, become more unholy and accurſed: here they that have, ſhall have more abundantly, and they that have not, ſhall loſe what they have already: here the living are made ſtrong and happy, and the dead do die again.

*He that giveth honour to a fool* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is like him that bindeth a ſtone in a ſling:* ſo we read it; but ſo, it is not eaſy to tell the meaning. The vulgar Latin reads it, *As he that throws a ſtone into the heap of Mercury, ſo is he that giveth honour to a fool;* and ſo the Proverb is eaſy. For the Gentiles did of old worſhip *Mercury*, by throwing ſtones at him: now giving honour to a Fool, is like throwing a ſtone at *Mercury;* that is, a ſtrange and unreaſonable act: for as the throwing of ſtones is againſt all natural and reaſonable way of Worſhip and Religion, and is againſt the way of honour; ſo is a Fool as ſtrange and unfit a perſon to receive it. But when *Rabbi Manaſſes* threw ſtones at *Mercury*, in contempt and defiance of the image and the falſe God, he was queſtioned for idolatry, and paid his liberty in exchange for his outward worſhip of what he ſecretly hated; but by his external act he was brought to judgment, and condemned for his hypocriſy. This is the caſe of every one, that in a ſtate of ſin comes to the holy Sacrament; he comes to receive the bread of God, and throws a ſtone at him; he pretends worſhip, and ſecretly hates him, and no man muſt come hither, but all that is within him, and all that is without, muſt be ſymbolical to the nature and holineſs of the myſteries, to the deſigns and the purpoſes of God. In ſhort, the full ſenſe of all this is expreſſed in the Canon-Law, in a few words. *A Sacrament is not to be given but to him that repents:* for there muſt no ſinful habit, or impure affection remain in that tabernacle, where God means to place his holy

Spirit. It is like bringing of a ſwine into the Propitiatory; ſuch a preſence cannot ſtand with the preſence of the Lord. It is *Dagon* before the Ark; the *Schechinah*, the glory of the Lord will depart that unhallowed place.

But becauſe the duty of Repentance, as it is a particular grace, is limited and affirmative, and therefore is determinable by proper relations and accidents, and there is a ſpecial neceſſity of repentance before the receiving of the Sacrament; we muſt inquire more particularly:

1. What actions or parts of repentance are neceſſary in our preparation to the receiving theſe Divine Myſteries.

2. How far a penitent muſt be advanced in a good life, before he may come ſafely; and how far before he may come with confidence.

3. What ſignifications of repentance are to be accepted by the Church.

4. Whether in caſe the duty be not performed, may every Miniſter of the Sacrament refuſe to admit the wicked Perſon, or the imperfect penitent that offers himſelf, and perſiſts in the deſire of it.

## Section III.—*What actions of Repentance are ſpecially required in our Preparations to the holy Sacrament?*

THE particular actions of repentance, which are to be performed in their proper ſeaſons, which cannot be always actual, becauſe they have variety, and cannot be attended to

altogether, all ſuch particulars of repentance are then in their ſeaſon, they have this for their opportunity. For it is an admirable wiſdom of God, ſo to diſpoſe the times and advantages of Religion, that by the ſolemnities of duty, our diſperſions are gathered up, our wanderings are united, our indifferencies are kindled, our wearineſs is recreated, our ſpirits are made buſy, our attention is called upon, our powers are made active, our virtues fermented: we are all called upon, and looked after, and engaged. For as it is in motion, and as it is in lines, a long and a ſtraight progreſſion diminiſhes the ſtrength, and makes languiſhing and infirmity; but by doubling the point, or making a new Centre, the moving body gathers up his parts and powers into a narrower compaſs, and by union, as by a new beginning, is reſcued from weakneſs and diminution; ſo it is in the life of a Chriſtian: When he firſt ſets forth, he is zealous and forward, full of appetite, and full of holy fires; but when his little fuel is conſumed, and his flame abates, when he goes on and grows weary, when he mingles with the world, and by every converſation is polluted or allayed, when by his very neceſſary affairs of life, he is made ſecular and intereſted, apt to tend his civil regards, and to be remiſs in the ſpiritual; by often and long handling of money, beginning too much to love it: then we are interrupted in our declining piety, we are called upon by Religion, and by the ſacredneſs of this holy duty, are made to begin again, not to go back, but to be re-enkindled.

Every time we receive the holy Sacrament, all

our duties are ſummed up; we make new Vows, we chaſtiſe our negligence, we mend our pace, we actuate our holy purpoſes, and make them ſtronger, we enter upon Religion, as if we had never done anything before; we bring again our firſt penitential hearts: and as when we pray, and pray long, our devotion ſlackens, and our attention becomes trifling, and by wandering thoughts we are gone very far from the obſervation of the offices; the good man that miniſters, calls out to us, *Let us pray;* and then the wandering thoughts run home, then we are troubled that we have loſt ſo much of our prayers, as we have not attended to; then we begin again, and pray the more paſſionately, by how much we obſerve ourſelves to have been more negligent before. If God did not particularly call upon us by theſe Religious neceſſities, and ſtop us by the ſolemn return of the Sacrament, and ſtir up our fires, and remind us of our duty, and make actual ſeaſons and opportunities for actual and great attendencies on Religion, if God did not make ſome days, and ſome neceſſities, and ſome opportunities for Heaven; the Soul and her intereſt would not be at all regarded. For this life is the day for the body, and our needs do indeed require ſo much attendance, and employ ſo much of our affections, and ſpend ſo much of our time, that it is neceſſary ſome abſtractions and ſeparations of time and offices be made.

Receiving the Holy Sacrament, is like a Lock upon the waters, which makes them riſe higher, and begin a fuller ſtream, as from a new principle

of emanation: So that the repentance which is the duty of our life, and diſperſed over all the parts and periods of it, like the waters in the firſt creation upon the face of the whole earth, is gathered together againſt the day of the Lord's Communion, as into a boſom and congregation of penitential waters. Then you are to mourn for your ſins, and to reſolve againſt them; then you are to remember what Vows you have already made and broken, how often you have prevaricated in your duty, and by what temptation you are uſed to fall: then you are to renew the ſtrength of your purpoſes, to fortify your tendereſt part, and to cut off all advantages from the enemy; then you muſt prune your Vine, and make the branches bleed; then the Bridegroom comes, and you muſt trim your lamp, and adorn it with the culture of Religion; that is, againſt the day of Communion, you muſt ſum up all the parts of your repentance; for the Sacrament is a ſummary of all the myſteries, and all the duty of the whole Religion of a Chriſtian. But Baptiſm and the holy Euchariſt do nothing for us, unleſs we do good works, and perfect them with a conjugation of holy duties, bringing forth fruits meet for repentance.

But our enquiry muſt be yet a little more particular.

There are ſome actions of repentance which muſt be finiſhed and made perfect, before we receive the holy Communion: and there are ſome which will be finiſhing all our life. Concerning the firſt, the queſtion is, which they are, and what muſt be done

concerning them. Concerning the ſecond, we are to enquire how far we muſt have proceeded in them, before he may communicate.

Thoſe parts of repentance which muſt be finiſhed before we approach the bleſſed Sacrament, are theſe,

1. We muſt have renounced, perfectly renounced all affections to ſin, and firmly purpoſe to amend all, to ſin no more, to lead a new life in all ſolid and material practices of virtue. This we learn from *Origen*, *We eat the bread which is made a holy thing, and which ſanctifies and makes holy all them who uſe it with holy and ſalutary purpoſes* and deſigns of living holily: not by a ſolemn and pompous profeſſion only, but with a real and hearty reſolution, reſolving not to ſay ſo, and be a Fool; but to ſay ſo, becauſe indeed we mean ſo; not to profeſs it becauſe it is the cuſtom of Chriſtians, and the expectation of the ſolemnity, but becauſe we intend really to be quit of the ſin for ever. Now concerning our purpoſes of amendment, theſe things are to be taken care of.

1. That they be made prudently, attentively, ſincerely, and with intuition upon a credible, poſſible, and deſigned effect. For there are ſome that make Vows, (purpoſes I cannot call them,) which they believe impoſſible to keep, and no man can wiſely purpoſe ſuch things, of which he hath ſuch belief: but they believe themſelves inevitably engaged to commit a ſin, and yet as inevitably engaged to ſay they will not. The *Greeks* tell of a famous Fool among them, her Name was *Acco*, who when

ſhe ſaw herſelf in a Glaſs, would diſcourſe as wiſely as ſhe could to the other Woman, and ſuppoſed her own ſhadow to be one of her Neighbours; with whom ſometimes ſhe had great buſineſs, but always huge civilities; only ſhe could never agree which of them ſhould go away firſt, or take the upper hand. Such wiſe reſolvers are ſome perſons; they take the ſhadow of it for a ſubſtance, and pleaſe themſelves by the entertainment of the images of things, and think that the outſide, and the words of a promiſe are the only thing that God requires; they and their promiſes do not know which ſhall go away firſt; the reſolution quickly dies, and the man preſently after; but the ſin lives and abides there ſtill, and will do ſo for ever. Caſt about and ſee; have you promiſed what you are likely to perform, and do you intend it in good earneſt never to conſent to a ſin, in no circumſtance, and for no argument, and by no *temptation?* For he that reſolves never to commit, that which he knows he ſhall commit, is like him, who reſolves he will never die; his vain reſolution ſets not his death back one hour. It is hypocriſy and lying to ſay it before God, and it is folly and madneſs to pretend that we will do it, to ourſelves. But of this I have already ſpoken.

2. He that in his preparation to the holy Communion, purpoſes to live a holy life, muſt not judge of the goodneſs of his purpoſes by the preſent intendment, but by the conſequent performance. He muſt not think it is well yet, becauſe many good purpoſes are broken by temptations, diſordered

by ſupervening accidents, fruſtrated by impotency, and laid aſide by purpoſes to the contrary; ſuch which *Plutarch* compares to windy eggs, which though they look fairly, yet produce no birds. Now by this conſideration, it is not intended, that a man muſt defer his Communion till he hath fully performed all his purpoſes of a holy life, for then he ſhould never Communicate till he dies: but by this we are adviſed to make ſuch enquiry, and to uſe ſuch cautions, and to require ſuch indications of the reality of our purpoſes, as becomes wiſe, intereſted, and conſidering perſons, who are undone if they be deceived, and receive damage by the profane and unholy uſages of the Divine Myſteries, if they were cozened and abuſed themſelves in the ſincerity and efficacy of their preparatory purpoſes. *Plato* tells, that *Alcibiades* did ſometimes wiſh *Socrates* had been dead, becauſe he was aſhamed to ſee him, for that he had not kept the promiſes, which he had ſo often made to him. If we, who often have communicated, do find that the purpoſes of reformation, which we have formerly made proved ineffective; if we perceive that we have begged pardon for our luſt, and yet ſtill remain under the power of the paſſion; if we have deplored our pride, and yet cannot endure to have others preferred before us; if we have reſolved againſt our haſty angers, and yet after the Communion find our peeviſhneſs to return as often, and to abide as long, and ſtill to forage and to prevail, we are like thoſe fooliſh birds, who having conceived by the wind, lay their eggs in the ſand,

and forget the place, and the waters wash them away.

In such cases as these something more must be done besides making resolutions. Let every man make some experiment of himself, and give some instances of performance, and get ground of his passion, and make no great haste to pass instantly to the holy Communion; you may more safely stay one day longer, than pass on one *minute* too soon: but be sure of this, the fierce saying of a few warm and holy words is not a sufficient preparation to these sacred Mysteries, and they, who upon such little confidences as these have hastened hither, have afterwards found causes enough to deplore their profane follies and presumptions, for they see, when they have eaten the Sop, they go out to sin against the Lord; as soon as the sacred Chalice hath refreshed their lips, they dishonoured God with their mouths, and retain their affections here below fastened to earth and earthly things.

This is it that makes our Communion have so little fruit. Men resolve to be good, and then Communicate; they resolve they will hereafter, but they are not yet, and yet they will Communicate; they resolve, and think no more of it, as if performance were no part of the duty and the obligation. In such cases it is not good to be hasty; for a little stay will do better than twenty arguments to enforce your purpose; You must make new resolutions and re-enforce your hold: but if you have already tried, and have found your purposes to be easily untwisted, and that, like the Scenes

at Maſques, they were only for that ſhow, to ſerve at that ſolemnity, learn to be more wary and more afraid the next time. The firſt folly was too bad, but to do ſo often is intolerable. But here are two Caſes to be reſolved.

Queſtion I.—*But of what nature and extent muſt our preparatory reſolution be? Muſt we reſolve againſt all ſin, or againſt ſome kinds only? If only againſt ſome ſorts, then we are not clean all over. If againſt all, then we find it impoſſible for us to perform it: And then either it is not neceſſary to reſolve, or not neceſſary to perform, or not neceſſary to Communicate.*

I anſwer; it is one thing to ſay, I ſhall never fall, I ſhall never be miſtaken, I ſhall never be ſurpriſed, or I ſhall never ſlacken my watchfulneſs and attention, and another thing to reſolve againſt the love and choice of every ſin. It is not always in our powers to avoid being ſurpriſed, or being deceived, or being dull and ſleepy in our carefulneſs and watches. Every good and well-meaning Chriſtian cannot promiſe to himſelf ſecurity; but he may be tempted, or over-preſſed with a ſudden fear when he cannot conſider, and be put ſometimes to act before he can take counſel: and though there is no one ſin we do but we do it *voluntarily*, and might eſcape it, if we would make uſe of the grace of God; yet the inference cannot run forth to all: we cannot therefore always eſcape all; any one we can, but not every one. The reaſon is

becauſe concerning any one if we make a queſtion, then we can and do deliberate, then we can attend, and we can conſider, and ſummon up the arts and auxiliaries of *Reaſon* and *Religion*, and we can hear both ſides ſpeak: and therefore we can chooſe: for he that can deliberate, can take either ſide; for if he could not chooſe when he hath conſidered which to chooſe, he were more a fool in conſidering, than by any inconſideration in the world: for he not only does unreaſonably by ſinning, but he conſiders unreaſonably and to no purpoſe, ſince his conſideration cannot alter the caſe. Certain it is, by him that can conſider, every ſin can be avoided: But then, this is as certain, that it is not poſſible always to conſider; but ſurpriſe and ignorance, haſte and dulneſs, indifference and wearineſs, are the entries at which ſome things that are not good will enter; but theſe things are ſuch, which by how much they are the leſs voluntary, by ſo much they are the leſs *imputed*.

Thus therefore, he that means to communicate worthily, muſt reſolve againſt every ſin, the greateſt and the leaſt; that is, 1. He muſt reſolve never to commit any ſin, concerning which he can deliberate. And 2. He muſt reſolve ſo to ſtand upon his guard, that he may not frequently be ſurpriſed; he muſt uſe prayer againſt all, and prudent caution in his whole converſation, and all the inſtruments of grace for the deſtruction of the whole body of ſin: and though in this valley of tears there are but few ſo happy ſouls as to triumph over all infirmities, we know of none; and if God hath any

ſuch on earth, they are peculiar jewels, kept in undiſcerned cabinets; yet all that intend to ſerve God heartily, muſt aim at a return to that ſtate of innocence, to the poſſibility of which Chriſt hath as certainly recovered us, as we loſt it by our own follies, and the ſin of *Adam:* that is, we muſt continually ſtrive, and every day get ground of our paſſions, and grow in underſtanding and the fear of God, that we be not ſo often deluded, nor in ſo many things be ignorant, nor be ſo eaſily ſurpriſed, nor ſo much complain of our weakneſs, nor the imperfection of our actions be in ſo many inſtances unavoidable. But in the matters of choice, in voluntary and deliberate actions, we muſt reſolve not to ſin at all. In theſe things we muſt be more than Conquerors.

2. He that intends worthily to communicate, before his coming, muſt quit all his next and immediate occaſions of habitual ſins, all thoſe ſtates of evil, by which ſo long as he dwells he cannot ſtand uprightly. For to reſolve againſt all ſin, and yet to retain that temptation, which hath been to this time ſtronger than all our reſolutions, is to abide in the midſt of a torrent, againſt which you cannot ſwim, and yet reſolve never to be drowned. There is no dallying in this caſe: He that will not throw out the bond-woman and her ſon, he that will ſtill retain the concubine, let him reſolve what he will, and will what he is commanded, and profeſs what he purpoſes; his profeſſion is nothing but words, and his reſolutions will prove as unſtable as the thinneſt air, which is not able to ſupport

a fly, unleſs with her wings ſhe fans it into an accidental thickneſs.

This may ſeem the hardeſt commandment of Chriſtianity; and Chriſt calls it a *cutting off the right hand, and plucking out the right eye;* as if it were the greateſt violence of the world. Indeed it is oftentimes a great inconvenience to our affairs and fortune: for it may be he, by whom we live, is he by whom we ſin; and we cannot eat but we muſt be in danger. If the caſe be ſo, it is indeed harder to leave the ſin; but yet the command of pulling out our eye is not the hardneſs, but is an act of eaſineſs, and an inſtrument of facilitation: For firſt, it muſt be remembered, that it is a queſtion of ſouls, and no intereſt can be laid in balance againſt a ſoul; it is moments againſt eternity, money againſt heaven, life eternal againſt a little penſion: And therefore this precept of pulling out the right eye is very eaſy, when it is made the price or inſtrument of avoiding eternal torments: A man had better pull his heart out, than nurſe a luſt, by which he ſhall die for ever.

But then next to this it is conſiderable, that this precept of putting out the right eye, that is, removing the next occaſion of ſin, is ſo far from being an hard commandment, that it is perfectly complying with our infirmities, and a ſecuring of our greateſt intereſts; by this he conducts us tenderly, becauſe we have no ſtrength. For if Chriſt had done as *Xenocrates* in *Valerius*, and commanded his Diſciples to dwell in danger that they might triumph more gloriouſly, we had reaſon to ſuſpect

ourſelves, and to tremble under the load of the impoſition; but Chriſt knew it would never conſiſt with our ſafety, and never conduce to his Father's glory; therefore Chriſt bids us to avoid the occaſion. He would not have weak and amorous perſons to converſe with fair women, that make weak eyes, and by the eyes wound the heart of a fooliſh man. For as *Trimethius* obſerves, good Angels never appeared in the likeneſs of women, they are tempters and temptations: and therefore becauſe of the danger Chriſt would not have us look; unleſs we can do it with ſafety, we muſt not be in their company. And therefore as God gave us legs and hands in great kindneſs, yet we give money to have them cut off when they endanger the whole body: ſo muſt we quite cut off the advantages of our eſtate, and the pleaſures of our life, rather than die eternally. There is no other variety but this; if we be tempted in our ſtate of life or of ſociety, we muſt do violence to our fortune or our will: But the particulars of the caſe are theſe.

1. If it be eaſy to quit the occaſion, do it leſt you be tempted; for it is worth ſome pain to be ſecured in the queſtion of your ſoul. When *Alcibiades* was ſent for from *Sicily* to *Athens* to be tried for his life, he hid himſelf, and left this anſwer to be ſent: It is better to decline a trial, than to eſcape from under it. And ſo it is here: It is glorious to eſcape, but it is the ſafer way not to put it to the venture; and therefore when you can, decline the trial; for he that reſolves to live, and yet will live under the ruins of a falling houſe, is but little better than a Fool.

2. If it be difficult to part with the tempting occaſion of your ſin, then conſider whether you can dwell with it, and yet not ſin; if you can, you may; for if you neither love your danger, nor can eaſily part with it, it is ſufficient that by plain force you reſiſt it.

3. But if by ſad experience you have learned your own weakneſs, and that as long as you dwell near the Furnace, you are ſcorched with the flames, no intereſt in this world muſt make you loſe your hopes of the other. It is not good to walk by a bank-ſide, or to play in the hollow ſeat of an Aſp. He that hath eſcaped often, is not ſecure; but he that hath already ſmarted under the Calamity, hath not ſo much left him to alleviate the evil, as the miſerable excuſe of, *I did not think it;* for he hath found that it was ſo dangerous. But therefore he muſt decline no trouble that he may ſave his ſoul; and that eſtate is well ſpent that ſecures ſuch an intereſt. But if a man be afraid of his forehead, he muſt not gather honey from a Bee-hive: and in many caſes, if a man ſtands upon the matter of inconvenience, he muſt not pretend to be a ſervant of God. If you dwell in a temptation you are in danger of eternal death, and to be ſecure againſt ſuch a danger, what danger is it which a wiſe man will not endure? All the glories of his Father could never have tempted *Phæton* to have come near one of the horſes of the Sun after they had given him ſuch a horrid fall. When you have ſeen yourſelf overpowered by the temptation, come not near it any more; change your dwelling, let

not one houſe hold you both, nor the ſame ſtars ever ſee you meet.

But that this muſt be done before you receive the bleſſed Sacrament is therefore affirmed; becauſe no man can reſolve againſt all ſin, unleſs he be ſtronger than his temptation, or fly from it. But he that chooſes to dwell with the next and proper opportunity of ſin; either he directly loves the ſin, or by interpretation he loves not God, who will not for his ſervice ſuffer the inconvenience of leaving his Miſtreſs, or venture the favour of his Patron, or is afraid to grieve his tempter, or will at no hand ſuffer the diminution of his fortune.

It may be deferred upon the ſame terms, upon which it can be quite omitted: that is? when upon any ſure account we are impregnable againſt it; but you know not that, when you muſt fly away directly. If you cannot with water quench your fire, take the wood from under it. I only add one general advice which will fit all ſorts of perſons that deſire truly to ſerve God and to arrive at an excellent ſtate of virtue: Although they live in the world, and are engaged by their duty and relations to many ſecular divertiſements, yet as they muſt do what they can to change theſe into Religion, and into ſome good thing one way or other; ſo by theſe difficulties and divertiſements, they will find it to be impoſſible that they ſhould do any thing that is greatly good; unleſs they cut off all ſuperfluous company, and viſits, and amuſements. That which is neceſſary is too much, and if it were not neceſſary it would not be tolerable, but that

which is more than needs, is a mill-ſtone about the neck of Religion, and makes it impoſſible to be excellently virtuous.

Queſtion II.—*But is he that intends to communicate bound to quit all thoſe occaſions of ſin, by which himſelf was tempted, and did fall, and die?*

1. I anſwer, that it is impoſſible he ſhould. If you live in delights your chaſtity is tempted; your humility is aſſaulted by receiving honour; your Religion by much buſineſs: your truth by much talk; your charity by living in the world; and yet we muſt not haſten out of it, nor ſwear eternal ſilence, nor lay aſide all our buſineſs, nor quit our preferment and honourable employment, nor refuſe all ſecular comforts, and live in pains that we may preſerve theſe reſpective graces, and yet ſomething we muſt do; ſome occaſions muſt be quitted before we communicate. To that therefore the anſwer is certain and indiſputable; that the occaſion that is immediate to the ſin, muſt be quitted in that which it does miniſter to ſin. A woman is not bound to ſpoil her face, though by her beauty ſhe hath fallen: becauſe her beauty was not the immediate cauſe: it was her unguarded converſation, and looſer ſociety; the laying her treaſure open, or her wanton comportment. For beauty will invite a noble flame, as ſoon as kindle a ſmoking brand; and therefore the face may be preſerved and the chaſtity too, if that be removed, which brings the danger and ſtands cloſer to the ſin.

2. When *Dionyſius* of *Sicily* gave to *Ariſtippus* five Attick talents, he and his ſervant dragged them home upon their backs: but finding himſelf too glad of his money, he threw it into the Sea, as ſuppoſing the money to be the tempter, and no ſafety to be had, as long as it was above the water. If he had thought right, he had done right: if he would not have cured his covetouſneſs and kept the money, he had done well to part with it; but it may be he might have been as ſafe, and yet wiſer too. But the reſolution is this. In this queſtion diſtinguiſh the next occaſion from that which is farther off; and we are bound to quit *that* not *this*, becauſe the virtue may be ſecured without it. A man may very well live in the world, and yet ſerve God; and if he be hindered by the world, it is not directly that, but ſomething elſe by which the cure muſt be effected, but if nothing elſe will do it, then there is no diſtinction, no difference between the neareſt occaſion and that which is farther off: for they muſt be all quitted: the face muſt be diſordered, the beauty ſullied, the money thrown away, the world renounced, rather than God be provoked to anger, and thy ſoul ruined by thy inevitable ſin.

3. He that comes to the holy Sacrament, muſt before his coming ſo repent of his injury, of his rapine, of his ſlander, or whatever the inſtance be, that before he Communicates he make actual reſtitution, perfect amends, entire ſatisfaction, and be really reconciled to his offended Brother. This is to be underſtood in theſe caſes.

1. If the injury be remaining and incumbent on thy Brother: for it is not fit for thee to receive benefit by Chriſt's death, ſo long as by thee thy Brother feels an injury. Thou art unjuſt ſo long as thou continueſt the wrong: and if the evil goes on, the repentance cannot: No man that repents does injure any man; and this Euchariſtical ſacrifice will never ſanctify *any man, unleſs he have the holy ſpirit of God, neither will the Lord bring advantages, or give him bleſſing conſequent to theſe ſolemn prayers, if he hath already injured the Lord, or proceeds to do injury to his Brother.* There is no repentance unleſs the penitent, as much as he can, make that to be undone which is done amiſs; and therefore becauſe the action can never be undone, at leaſt undo the miſchief; untie the bands of thy neighbour's arms, do juſtice and judgment; that is repentance; reſtore the Pledges; give again that you had robbed, aſk pardon for thy injury, return to peace, put thy neighbour if thou canſt into the ſame ſtate of good from whence by thy ſin he was removed. That is a good repentance that bears fruit, and not that which produces leaves only. When the Heathen Gods were to chooſe what trees they would have ſacred to them, and uſed in their Feſtivals; *Jupiter* choſe the Oak, *Venus* the Myrtle, *Apollo* loved the Laurel, but wiſe *Minerva* took the Olive. The other trees gave no fruit; an uſeleſs apple from the Oak, or little berries from the Laurel and Myrtle; but beſides the ſhow, they were good but for very little: but the Olive gives an excellent fruit, fit for Food and Phyſic, which

when *Jupiter* obſerved, he kiſſed his Daughter, and called her wife: for all pompouſneſs is vain: and the ſolemn Religion ſtands for nothing, unleſs that which we do, be profitable and good for material uſes. *Cui bono?* To what purpoſe is our repentance? Why do we ſay we are ſorrowful? What is that? *Nollem factum*, I wiſh I had never done it, for I did amiſs. If you ſay as you think, make that it ſhould be no more; do no new injury, and cut off the old. Reſtore him to his fame, to his money, to his liberty, and to his loſt advantages.

2. But this muſt ſuppoſe, that it is in thy power to do it. If it be in thy power to do it, and thou doeſt it not, thou canſt not reaſonably pretend that thou art ſo much as ſorrowful. For what repentance is it which enjoys the pleaſure and the profit of the ſin, that reaps the pleaſant fruits of it, that eats the revenues, that gathers the grapes from our neighbour's Vine, that dwells in the fields of the fatherleſs, and kneads his bread with the infuſion of the Widow's tears? The Snake in the Apologue crept into the holy Phial of ſacred oil, and licked it up, till ſhe ſwelled ſo big, that ſhe could not get forth from the narrow entrance, but ſhe was forced to refund it every drop, or ſhe had there remained a priſoner for ever. And therefore tell me no more thou art ſorry for what thou haſt done: if thou retaineſt the purchaſe of thy ſin, thou loveſt the fruit of it, and therefore canſt not curſe the tree. Thou didſt never love the ſin for itſelf without the profit, and therefore if thou didſt love that, thou loveſt the ſin as much as ever; neither more nor leſs, but thou art ſtill the ſame man.

Queſtion III.—*But can it in no caſe be lawful to put off our reſtitution or reconciliation with our Brother? Is it not ſufficient to reſolve to do it afterward, and in the mean time to receive the Sacrament? For if the heart be peaceful, and the mind be juſt, the outward work may follow in its due time, and all be well enough.*

I anſwer, That a man is not tied in that Mathematical inſtant in which he remembers his injuſtice, to go and make reſtitution. He is not tied to go out of the Church, or to riſe at midnight, or to leave his meat, as *Tobit* did to go and bury the dead; unleſs there be danger, that if he do not do it then, it ſhall never be done at all: For in this caſe, he muſt do it, whether it be convenient or inconvenient, whether it be ſeaſonable or not: But every man is bound to do it as ſoon as he morally can, and he muſt go about it, as he does about other actions in which he is mightily concerned. If a man did diligently examine himſelf, and yet thought not of the obligation (though that can hardly be ſuppoſed; yet if it be ſo, and he did not think of it) till he were kneeling before the holy Table, then it were ſufficient to reſolve to do it ſpeedily after, becauſe he cannot without ſcandal remove and go forth, but without prejudice to his Brother he can ſtay till next day: If he enquired diligently, and had a mind ready to do everything, which he could learn to be his duty, there was no unworthineſs in him to hinder him from coming;

and this cannot be prejudiced by a new and ſudden diſcovery, if it be entertained with the ſame juſtice and readineſs of mind. But elſe; what you can learn in theſe caſes ought to be done at all, muſt be done before the Communion, if we can: that is, there muſt be no let in the will, no imperfect reſolution, no indifference of affections to it, if it can be done before, it muſt. For ſo ſaid our bleſſed Saviour, *If at the Altar thou remembereſt, go and be reconciled.* That is, if thou art not reconciled, if thou art not in charity, or if thou beeſt in thy heart ſtill injurious, and haſt not a juſt and a righteous ſoul, go even from before the Altar; but if thou haſt a real charity, and haſt done the duties of theſe graces by a moral diligence, you may come; and a ſudden remembrance of an undiſcovered obligation need not to expoſe thee to the reproach of ſudden departure: provided, I ſay always, that thou wert indeed truly reconciled, and truly charitable. For by our Lord's expreſs command you muſt at no hand offer till thou haſt been in Charity: till thou haſt forgiven, or till thou doſt ceaſe to hate, till thou beeſt *reconciled*, that's our Saviour's word; for it is the inward grace which thou art tied to in all circumſtances, and therefore in that; but to the outward, ſomething elſe may be neceſſary, and fit to be conſidered. Nothing can hinder thee from charity, in any circumſtances whatſoever; from preſent or actual reſtitution, many things may, and yet thou be innocent; but if thou beeſt an angry perſon, or an unjuſt, or malice be upon thy heart, or injuſtice upon thy hand,

let not thy hand be upon the Altar, nor thy heart upon the Sacrament. If thy Brother hath ought againſt thee, I know not why thou ſhouldeſt make haſte to receive the Sacrament; make haſte to be reconciled: There is haſte of this, there is no ſuch haſte of the other, but thou muſt yet ſtay, till thou haſt done thy duty.

Only remember this, every deferring of it is ſome degree of unwillingneſs to do it; and therefore it is not good to truſt thy own word, till thou haſt ſerved thy own end. After thou haſt received, thou wilt think that there is leſs need than before, and therefore thou wilt make leſs haſte. For what a religious man ſaid in the caſe of a dying perſon, is alſo in proportion true of him who is to Communicate, *He that will not reſtore preſently, if he can, is not to be abſolved, is not to be communicated, although he promiſe reſtitution.* Becauſe it cannot be likely that he intends it heartily, that puts it off longer than the day of its extreme, or the day of its poſitive neceſſity. Let us not deceive ourſelves: of all the things in the world the holy Sacrament was never intended to give countenance to ſinners, or palliation of a ſin; warranty or colour, excuſe, or perpetuity. There is a hard expreſſion in the Prophet, *They have filled the Land with Violence; and have returned to provoke me to anger, and lo, they put the branch to their noſe, and behold they are as mockers;* ſo the LXX. read it; but make no mention of putting the branch to their noſe. *Theodotion* puts them both together: *they hold out the branch like mockers;* and to this *Symmachus* gives

yet a little more light, They lifted up the branch, making a noiſe like them that mock with their noſes. But this interpretation is ſomething hard; there is yet an eaſier, and that which makes theſe words pertinent to our preſent duty, and a ſevere reproof to them who come to this holy ſervice of God, not with the love of Sons, and the duty of Servants, but with the diſaffection of Enemies. The carrying of branches in the ſuperſtition of the *Gentiles* and the cuſtom of the *Jews* was a ſign of honour. Thus they carried the Pine-tree before the ſhepherd's God: they gave the Cypreſs to *Sylvanus*, and the Abricot-tree to *Iſis;* and the branches of Palms the Jews did carry before our bleſſed Saviour, and this is it that God complains of; They carried branches as if they did him honour; but they held them to their noſes, like mockers: that is, they mocked him ſecretly when they worſhipped him publicly; they came with fair pretences and foul hearts; their ceremony was religious all over, but their lives were not anſwerable. The difficulty came from the homonymy of the Hebrew word which ſignified a *Branch* and a *Noiſe;* and it will be as difficult to diſtinguiſh an Hypocrite from a Communicant, unleſs we really purpoſe to live better, and do ſo; unleſs we leave the next occaſions to ſin, and do juſtice and judgment, and ceaſe to do evil, and cauſe that my Brother ſhall no longer feel the evils of my injuſtice, and of my fooliſh crimes.

SECTION IV.—*How far we muſt have proceeded in our general Repentance, and emendation of our lives, before we Communicate?*

TO this I anſwer, That *no man is fit to Communicate but he that is fit to die;* that is, he muſt be in the ſtate of grace, and he muſt have trimmed his lamp; he muſt ſtand readily prepared by a ſtate of repentance, and againſt a ſolemn time, he muſt make that ſtate more actual, and his graces operative.

Now in order to this, it is to be conſidered, that preparation to death hath great latitude; and not only he is fit to die who hath attained to the fulneſs of the ſtature of Chriſt, to a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus; but every one who hath renounced his ſin with heartineſs and ſincerity, and hath begun to mortify it. But in theſe caſes of beginning, or of infancy in Chriſt; though it be certain that every one who is a new creature, though but newly become ſo, is born of God, and hath life abiding in him, and therefore ſhall not paſs into condemnation: yet concerning ſuch perſons, the Rulers of Souls and Miniſters of Sacraments have nothing but a judgment of charity, and the ſentences of hope relating to the perſons; the ſtate is ſo little, and ſo allayed, and ſo near to the late ſtate of death from which they are recovering, that God only knows, how things are with them; yet becauſe we know

that there is a beginning, in which new converts are truly reconciled, there is a firſt period of life, and as we cannot ſay in many caſes that *this is it*, ſo in many we cannot ſay, *this is not*; therefore the Church hopes well of perſons that die in their early progreſſions of piety, and conſequently refuſes not to give to them theſe Divine Myſteries. Whoever are reconciled to God, may be reconciled to the Church, whoſe office it is, only to declare the Divine Sentence, and to adminiſter it, and to help towards the verification of it.

But becauſe the Church cannot be ſurer of any perſon that his ſins are pardoned, that he is reconciled to God, that he is in the ſtate of grace, that if he then dies he ſhall be ſaved, than a man himſelf, can be of himſelf, and in his own caſe, which certainly he knows better than any man elſe; and that our degree of hope and confidence of being ſaved when it is not preſumption, but is prudent and reaſonable, does increaſe in proportion to our having well uſed and improved God's grace, and enlarges itſelf by our proportions of mortification and ſpiritual life; and every man that is wiſe and prudent, abides in fears and uncertain thoughts, till he hath gotten a certain victory over all his ſins; and though he dies in hope, yet not without trembling, till he finds that he is more than conqueror; therefore in proportion to this addreſs to death, muſt alſo be our addreſs to the holy Sacrament. For no man is fit to die, but he that can be united unto Chriſt; and he only that can be ſo, muſt be admitted to a participation of his body and his blood.

It is the ſame caſe, in both we dwell with Chriſt; and the two ſtates differ but in degrees; it is but a paſſing from Altar to Altar, from that where the Miniſter of the Church officiates, to that where the head of the Church does intercede.

There is this only difference, there may be ſome proportions of haſte to the Sacrament more than unto death, upon this account, becauſe the reception of the Sacrament in worthy diſpoſitions does increaſe thoſe excellencies, in which death ought to find us; and therefore we may deſire to communicate, becauſe we perceive a want of *grace;* and yet for the ſame reaſon we may at the ſame time be afraid to die, becauſe after that, we can receive no more; but as that finds us, we ſhall abide for ever. But he that fears juſtly, may yet in many caſes die ſafely; and he ſhall find, that his fears when he was alive, were uſeful to the caution and zeal and haſtineſs of repentance; but were no certain indication that God was not reconciled unto him. The beſt and ſevereſt perſons do in the greateſt parts of their ſpiritual life complain of their imperfect ſtate, and feel the load of their ſins, and apprehend with trembling the ſad conſequents of their ſins, and every day contend againſt them; and forget all that is paſt of good actions done, and preſs forward ſtill to more grace, and are as hungry as if they had none at all; and thoſe men, if they die, go to Chriſt; and ſhall reign with him for ever; and yet many of them go with a trembling heart, and though conſidering the infinite obliquity of them, they cannot over-

value their ſins, yet conſidering the infinite goodneſs of God, and his readineſs to accept it, they undervalue their repentance, and are ſafe in their humility, and in God's goodneſs, when in many other regards they think themſelves very unſafe. Now ſuch men as theſe, muſt not be as much afraid to communicate, as they are afraid to die; but theſe and all men elſe, muſt not communicate till they be in that condition, that if they did die, it would go well with them: and the reaſon is plain; becauſe every friend of God dying ſo, is certainly ſaved; and he that is no friend of God is unworthy to partake of the table of the Lord.

But for the reducing the Anſwer of this Queſtion to practice, and to particular conſiderations: I am to adviſe theſe things.

1. Becauſe no man of an ordinary life, and a newly begun repentance ought haſtily to pronounce himſelf acquitted, and in the ſtate of grace, and in the ſtate of ſalvation, in this rule of proportion; we are only to take the judgment of charity, not of certainty, and what is uſually by wiſe and good men ſuppoſed to be the certain, though the leaſt meaſure of hopeful expectations in order to death, that we muſt ſuppoſe alſo to be our laſt meaſure of repentance preparatory to the bleſſed Sacrament.

2. This meaſure muſt not be taken in the days of health and careleſſneſs; but when we are either actually in apprehenſion, or at leaſt in deep meditation of death; when it is dreſſed with all ſuch terrors and material conſiderations, that it looks like the King of terrors, and at leaſt makes our ſpirits full of fear and of ſobriety.

3. This measure must be carefully taken without the allay of foolish Principles, or a careless spirit, or extravagant confidences of personal predestination, or of being in any sect; but with the common measures which Christians take, when they weigh sadly their sins, and their fears of the Divine displeasure; let them take such proportions, which considering men rely upon when they indeed come to die; for few sober men die upon such wild accounts as they rely upon in talk and interest, when they are alive. He that prepares himself to death, considers how deeply God hath been displeased, and what hath been done towards a reconciliation; and he that can probably hope by the usual measures of the Gospel that he is in probability of pardon, hath by that learnt by what measures he must prepare himself to the holy Sacrament.

4. Some persons are of a timorous conscience, and apt to irregular and unreasonable fears, and nothing but a single ray from heaven can give them any portions of comfort; and these men never trust to any thing they do, or anything that is done for them; and fear by no other measures but by consideration of the intolerable misery which they should suffer if they did miscarry; and because these men can speak nothing, and think nothing comfortable of themselves in that agony, or in that meditation, therefore they can make use of this rule by the proportions of that judgment of charity which themselves make of others; and in what cases and in what dispositions they conclude others to die in the Lord; if they take those or the like measures for themselves, and accordingly in those

diſpoſitions addreſs themſelves to the holy Sacrament, they will make that uſe of this rule which is intended, and which may do them benefit.

5. As there are great varieties and degrees of fitneſs to death, ſo alſo to the holy Sacrament; he that hath lived beſt, hath enough to deplore when he dies, and cauſes enough to beg for pardon of what is paſt, and for aids in the preſent need; and when he does communicate, he hath in ſome proportion the ſame too; he hath cauſes enough to come humbly; to come as did the Publican, and to ſay, as did the Centurion, *Lord, I am not worthy*. But he that may die with moſt confidence, becauſe he is in the beſt diſpoſitions, he may alſo communicate with moſt comfort, becauſe he does it with moſt holineſs.

6. But the leaſt meaſures of repentance, leſs than which cannot diſpoſe us to the worthy reception of the holy Myſteries, are theſe.

1. As ſoon as we are ſmitten with the terrors of an afflicted conſcience, and apprehend the evil of ſin, or fear the Divine Judgments, and upon that account reſolve to leave our ſin, we are not inſtantly worthy and fit to communicate. Attrition is not a competent diſpoſition to the bleſſed Sacrament; becauſe although it may be the gate and entrance of a ſpiritual life, yet it can be no more unleſs there be love in it; unleſs it be contrition, it is not a ſtate of favour and grace, but a diſpoſition to it. He that does not yet love God, cannot communicate with Chriſt; and he that reſolves againſt ſin out of fear only, or temporal re-

gards, hath given too great teſtimony that he loves the ſin ſtill, and will return to it, when that which hinders him ſhall be removed. Faith working by charity is the wedding garment; and he that comes hither not veſted with this, ſhall be caſt into outer darkneſs. But the words of St. *Paul* are expreſs as to this particular, *In Chriſt Jeſus nothing can avail, but faith working by love;* and therefore without this, the Sacrament itſelf will do no good; and if it does no good, it cannot be but it will do harm. Our repentance diſpoſing us to this Divine Feaſt, muſt at leaſt be contrition, or a ſorrow for ſins, and purpoſes to leave them, by reaſon of the love of God working in our hearts.

2. But becauſe no man can tell, whether he hath the love of God in him, but by the proper effects of love, which is keeping the Commandments; no man muſt approach to the holy Sacrament upon the account of his mere reſolution to leave ſin: until he hath broken the habit, until he hath caſt away his fetters, until he be at liberty from ſin: and hath ſhaken off its laws and dominion, ſo that he can ſee his love to God entering upon the ruins of ſin, and perceives that God's Spirit hath advanced his Scepter, by the declenſion of the ſin that dwelt within; till then he may do well to ſtand in the outward Courts, leſt by a too haſty entrance into the Sanctuary, he carry along with him *the abominable thing*, and bring away from thence the *intolerable ſentence* of condemnation. A man cannot rightly judge of his love to God, by his acts and tranſports of fancy, or the

emanations of a warm paſſion; but by real events and changes of the heart. The reaſon is plain, becauſe every man hath firſt loved ſin, and obeyed it, and until that obedience be changed, that firſt love remains, and that is abſolutely inconſiſtent with the love of God: an act of love, that is, a loving ejaculation, a ſhort prayer affirming and profeſſing love, is a very unſure warrant for any man to conclude, that his repentance is indeed contrition, for wicked perſons may in their good intervals have ſuch ſudden fires; and all men that are taught to underſtand contrition to be a ſorrow for ſins, proceeding from the love of God, and that love of God to be ſufficiently ſignified by ſingle acts of loving prayer, can eaſily by ſuch forms and ready exerciſes fancy and conclude themſelves in a very good condition at an eaſy rate. But contrition is therefore neceſſary, becauſe attrition can be but the one half of repentance; it can turn us away from ſin, but it cannot convert us unto God; that muſt be done by love, and that love, eſpecially in this caſe, is manifeſtly nothing elſe but obedience; and until that obedience be evident and diſcernible, we cannot pronounce any comfort concerning our ſtate of love; without which, no man can ſee God, and no man can taſte him or feel him without it.

3. A ſingle act of obedience in the inſtance of any kind, where the ſcene of repentance lies, is not a ſufficient preparation to the holy Sacrament, nor demonſtration of our contrition: unleſs it be in the caſe of repentance only for ſingle acts of ſin.

In this caſe to oppoſe a good to an evil, an act of proportionable abſtinence to a ſingle act of intemperance, for which we are really ſorrowful, and (as we ſuppoſe) heartily troubled, and confeſs it, and pray for pardon, may be admitted as a competent teſtimonial, that this ſorrow is real, and this repentance is contrition; becauſe it does as much for virtue as in the inſtance it did for vice: always provided, that whatſoever aggravations or accidental grandeurs were in the ſin, as *ſcandal*, *deliberation*, *malice*, *miſchief*, *hardneſs*, *delight* or *obſtinacy*, be alſo proportionably accounted for in the reckonings of the repentance. But if the penitent return from a habit or ſtate of ſin, he will find it a harder work to quit all his old affection to ſin, and to place it upon God entirely; and therefore he muſt ſtay for more arguments than one, or a few ſingle acts of grace; not only becauſe a few may proceed from many cauſes accidentally, and not from the love of God; but alſo becauſe his love and habitual deſires of ſin muſt be naturally extinguiſhed by many contrary acts of virtue; and till theſe do enter, the old love does naturally abide. It is true, that ſin extinguiſhed, not only by the natural force of the contrary actions of virtue, but by the Spirit of God, by aids from Heaven, and powers ſupernatural; and God's love haſtens our pardon and acceptation; yet ſtill, this is done by parts and methods of natural progreſſion, after the manner of nature, though by the aids of God; and therefore it is fit that we expect the changes, and make our judgment by material events, and diſcerned mutations, before we

communicate in theſe myſteries, in which whoever unworthily does communicate, enters into death.

4. He that hath reſolved againſt all ſin, and yet falls into it regularly at the next temptation, is yet in a ſtate of evil, and unworthineſs to communicate; becauſe he is under the dominion of ſin, he obeys it, though unwillingly; that is, he grumbles at his fetters, but ſtill he is in ſlavery and bondage. But if having reſolved againſt all ſin, he delights in none, deliberately chooſes none, is not ſo often ſurpriſed, grows ſtronger in grace, and is miſtaken but ſeldom, and repents when he is, and arms himſelf better, and watches more carefully againſt all, and increaſes ſtill in knowledge; whatever imperfection is ſtill adherent to the man unwillingly, does indeed allay his condition, and is fit to humble and caſt him down; but it does not make him unworthy to communicate, becauſe he is in the ſtate of grace; he is in the Chriſtian warfare, and is on God's ſide; and the holy Sacrament, if it have any effect at all, is certainly an inſtrument or a ſign in the hands of God to help his ſervants, to enlarge his grace, to give more ſtrengths, and to promote them to perfection.

5. But the ſum of all is this, He that is not freed from the dominion of ſin, he that is not really a ſubject of the kingdom of grace, he in whoſe mortal Body ſin does reign, and the Spirit of God does not reign, muſt at no hand preſent himſelf before the holy Table of the Lord; becauſe, whatever diſpoſitions and alterations he may begin to have in order to *pardon* and *holineſs*, he as yet hath

neither, but is God's enemy, and therefore cannot receive his holy Son.

6. But becauſe the change is made by parts, and effected by the meaſures of other intellectual and ſpiritual changes, that is, after the manner of men, from imperfection to perfection by all the intermedial ſteps of moral degrees, and good and evil in ſome periods, *have but a little diſtance, though they ſhould have a great deal;* and it is at firſt very hard to know whether it be *life or death;* and after that, it is ſtill very difficult to know whether it be *health or ſickneſs:* and dead men cannot eat, and ſick men ſcarce can eat with benefit, at leaſt are to have the weakeſt and the loweſt diet: and after all this, it is of a conſequence infinitely evil, if men eat this Supper indiſpoſed and unfit. It is all the reaſon of the world that returning ſinners ſhould be buſy in their repentances, and do their work in the field (as it is in the parable of the Goſpel) and in their due time *come home, and gird themſelves, and wait upon their Lord;* and when they are bidden and warranted, then to ſit down in the Supper of their Lord. But in this caſe, it is good to be *as ſure as we can;* as ſure as the Analogy of theſe Divine Myſteries require, and as our needs permit.

7. He that hath committed a ſingle act of ſin, a little before the Communion, ought for the reverence of the holy Sacrament to abſtain, till he hath made proportionable amends; and not only ſo, but if the ſin was inconſiſtent with the ſtate of grace, and deſtroyed or interrupted the Divine favour, as in caſes of *fornication, murder, perjury, any*

*malicious or deliberate known great crime*, he muſt comport himſelf as a perſon returning from a habit or ſtate of ſin; and the reaſon is, becauſe he that hath loſt the Divine favour, cannot tell how long he ſhall be before he recovers it, and therefore would do well not to ſnatch at the portion and food of Sons, whilſt he hath reaſon to fear, that he hath the ſtate and calamity of Dogs, who are careſſed well, if they feed on fragments and crumbs that are thrown away.

Now this Doctrine and theſe cautions, beſides that they are conſonant to Scripture and the analogy of this divine Sacrament, are nothing elſe but what was directly the ſentiment of all the beſt, moſt ſevere, religious, and devouteſt ages of the Primitive Church. For true it is, the Apoſtles did indefinitely admit the faithful to the holy Communion; but they were perſons wholly inflamed with thoſe holy fires which Jeſus Chriſt ſent from Heaven to make them burning and ſhining lights; ſuch which our deareſt Lord, with his blood ſtill warm and freſh, filled with his holy love; ſuch whoſe ſpirits were ſo ſeparate from the affections of the world, that they laid their eſtates at the Apoſtles' feet, and took with joy the ſpoiling of their goods; ſuch who by improving the graces they had received, did come to receive more abundantly; and therefore theſe were fit to receive *the bread of the ſtrong*. But this is no invitation for them to come who feel ſuch a lukewarmneſs and indifference of ſpirit and devotion, that they have more reaſon to ſuſpect it to be an effect of evil life,

rather than of infirmity: for them who feel no heats of love but of themſelves; for them who are wholly immerged in ſecular affections and intereſts; for them who are full of paſſions, and void of grace; theſe from the example of the others may derive caution, but no confidence: ſo long as they *perſevered in the doctrine of the Apoſtles,* ſo long they alſo did continue *in the breaking of bread,* and ſolemn conventions for *prayer:* for to perſevere in the Doctrine of the Apoſtles ſignified a life moſt exactly Chriſtian; for that was the Doctrine Apoſtolical, according to the words of our Lord, *teaching to obſerve all things which I have commanded you.*

And by this method the Apoſtolical Churches and their deſcendents, did adminiſter theſe holy Myſteries; a full and an excellent teſtimony whereof we have in that excellent Book of Eccleſiaſtical Hierarchy commonly attributed to St. *Dionyſius. The Church drives from the Sacrifice of the Temple,* (*meaning the divine Sacrament*) *ſuch perſons for whom it is too ſublime and elevated: Firſt, thoſe who are not yet inſtructed and taught concerning the participation of the Myſteries: Next thoſe who are fallen from the holy and Chriſtian ſtate,* (*meaning Apoſtates, and ſuch as have* renounced *their* Baptiſm, *or fallen from the grace of it, by a ſtate of a deadly ſin, or fouleſt crimes.*) *Thirdly, they who are poſſeſſed with evil ſpirits: And laſtly, thoſe who indeed have begun to retire from ſin to a good life, but they are not yet purified from the phantaſms and images of their paſt inordinations, by a divine habitude and love, with purity and without mixture. And to conclude, they*

*who are not yet perfectly united unto God alone, and to ſpeak according to the ſtyle of Scripture, they who are not entirely inculpable and without reproach.* And when St. *Soter* exhorted all perſons to receive upon the day of the inſtitution, or the Veſpers of the Paſſion, he excepted thoſe who were forbidden, becauſe they had committed any grievous ſin.

But what was the Doctrine and what were the uſages of the Primitive Church in the miniſtry of the Bleſſed Sacrament, appears plainly in the two Epiſtles of St. *Baſil* to *Amphilochius* in the Canons of *Ancyra*, thoſe of *Peter* of *Alexandria*, *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, and *Nyſſen;* which make up the penitential of the Greek Church, and are explicated by *Balſamo;* in which we find ſometimes the penance of two years impoſed for a ſingle Theft; four years, and ſeven years, for an act of uncleanneſs; eleven years for perjury; fifteen years for adultery and inceſt; that is, ſuch perſons were for ſo many years ſeparate from the Communion, and by a holy life, and ſtrict obſervances of penitential impoſitions, were to give teſtimony of their contrition and amends. The like to which are to be ſeen in the Penitentials of the Weſtern Church; That of *Theodorus* Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, that of venerable *Bede*, the old *Roman*, and that of *Rabanus Maurus* Archbiſhop of *Mentz*. The reaſon of which ſeverity we find thus accounted in St. *Baſil*, *all this is done, that they may try the fruits of their repentance; For we do not judge of theſe things by the time, but by the manner of their repentance.* For the Biſhop had power to ſhorten the days of

their ſeparation and abſtention; and he that was an excellent penitent was much ſooner admitted; but by the injunction of ſo long a trial, they declared, that much purification was neceſſary to ſuch an addreſs. And if after, or in theſe penitential years of abſtention, they did not mend their lives, though they did perform their penances, they were not admitted. Theſe were but the Church's ſigns, by other accidents and manifeſtations if it happened that a great contrition was ſignified, or a ſecret incorrigibility became publick, the Church would admit the firſt ſooner, and the latter not at all. For it was purity and holineſs that the Church required of all her Communicants; and what meaſure of it ſhe required, we find thus teſtified, *The faithful which hath been regenerated by Baptiſm, ought to be nouriſhed by the participation of the Divine Myſteries; and being clothed with Jeſus Chriſt, and having the quality of a Child of God, he ought to receive the nutriment of life eternal, which the Son of God himſelf hath given us: and this nutriment is obedience to the word of God, and execution of his will, of which Jeſus Chriſt hath ſaid, Man lives not by bread alone, but my meat is to do my Father's will.* And a little after he affirms, *That whereas St.* Paul *ſaith, That Jeſus Chriſt hath appointed us to eat his body, in memory of his death, the true remembrance which we ought to have of his death, is to place before our eyes that which the Apoſtle ſaith, that we were wholly dead, and Jeſus Chriſt died for us, to the end that we ſhould no more live unto ourſelves, but to him alone, and that ſo we ſhould do him honour, and give him thanks for*

*his death, by the purity of our life, without which, we engage ourſelves in a terrible damnation, if we receive the Euchariſt.* And again, *He that, not having this charity which preſſes us, and cauſes us to live for him who died for us, dares approach to the Euchariſt, grieves the holy Spirit. For it is neceſſary, that he who comes to the memorial of Jeſus Chriſt, who died and roſe again for us, ſhould not only be clean from all impurity of fleſh and ſpirit, but he that ſhould demonſtrate the death of him who died and roſe for us, by being dead unto ſin, to the world, and to himſelf; and that he lives no more, but only to God through Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore St.* Cyprian *complains as of a new and worſe perſecution, that lapſed perſons are admitted to the Communion, before they have brought forth fruits of a worthy repentance; and affirms that ſuch an admiſſion of ſinners is to them, as hail to the young fruits, as a blaſting wind to the trees, as the murrain to the cattle, as a tempeſt to the ſhips: the ſhips are overturned and broken, the fruits fall, the trees are blaſted, the cattle die, and the poor ſinner by being admitted too ſoon to the miniſtries of life, falls into eternal death.* And if we put together ſome words of St. *Ambroſe*, they clearly declare this Doctrine, and are an excellent Sermon: *Thou comeſt to the Altar, the Lord Jeſus calls thee; he ſees thee to be clean from all ſin, becauſe thy ſins are waſhed away, therefore he judges thee worthy of the celeſtial Sacraments, and therefore he invites thee to the heavenly banquet: Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth. But ſome deſire to be admitted to penance, that preſently they may receive the Communion: Theſe*

*men do not ſo much deſire themſelves to be abſolved, as that the Prieſt be bound; for they do not put off their own evil conſcience. But I would that the Guilty man ſhould hope for pardon; let him require it with tears, ſeek it with ſighs, beg to obtain it by the weepings of all the people, and if he be denied the Communion again and again, let him conſider that his prayer was not ſufficiently earneſt; let him weep more, and pray more.* To which I ſhall add ſome like words of St. *Auſtin, Therefore my deareſt Brethren, let every one conſider his Conſcience, and when he finds himſelf wounded with any crime; firſt let him take care with prayers, and faſtings, and alms, to cleanſe his Conſcience, and ſo let him receive the Euchariſt ——For he that knowing his guilt, ſhall humbly remove himſelf from the Altar, for the amendment of his life, ſhall not fear to be wholly excommunicated from that eternal and celeſtial banquet: For this Divine Sacrament is not to be eaten with* confidence and boldneſs, but with fear, and all manner of purity, *ſaith St.* Chryſoſtom; *for impudence in theſe approaches, will certainly ſlay the ſouls. For this is the body, whither none but Eagles are to gather; becauſe they ought to be ſublime and elevated Souls, ſuch which have nothing of earthlineſs in them, that do not ſit and prey upon the ground, that are not immerged in the love of creatures; but ſuch whoſe flight is towards Heaven, whoſe ſpirit does behold the Sun of Righteouſneſs with a penetrating contemplation, and piercing eyes: for this is the Table of Eagles and not of Owls.* And therefore this Saint complains of ſome *who did approach to the Euchariſt as it were by chance, or*

*by cuſtom and conſtraint of Laws, rather than by argument and choice. In whatſoever eſtate their ſouls are, they will partake of theſe Myſteries, becauſe it is Lent, or becauſe it is the Feaſt of the Epiphany: but certain it is, that it is not the time which puts us into a capacity of doing this action. For it is not Lent, nor the Epiphany, which makes us worthy to approach to the Son of God; but the ſincerity and purity of the ſoul: with this come at any time; but without this, never.* In fine, it is the general doctrine of the holy Fathers, and the public practice of the Primitive Church, that no impenitent perſon ſhould come to theſe Divine Myſteries; and they that are truly penitent, ſhould practiſe deep humility, and undergo many humiliations, and live in a ſtate of repentance, till by little and little they have recovered the holineſs they had loſt, and muſt for a long time live upon the word of God, before they approach to the holy Table to be nouriſhed by his body. For ſo ſhould every prodigal child cry unto his Lord, *Drive me not, O Lord, out of thy doors, leſt the enemy eſpying a wanderer and a vagabond, take me for a ſlave. I do not yet deſire to approach to thy holy Table, thy myſtical and terrible Table; for I have not confidence with my impure eyes to behold the Holy of Holies. Only ſuffer me to enter into thy Church amongſt the Catechumens, that by beholding what is there celebrated, I may by little and little enter again into the participation of them; to the end that the Divine Waters of thy Word running upon me, may purify my ears from the impreſſions which have been made upon them by ungodly ſongs, and from the filthi-*

*neſs they have left behind; and ſeeing how the righteous people partake by a holy violence of thy precious Jewels, I may conceive a burning deſire to have hands worthy to receive the ſame excellencies.* I end this collection of the ancient Doctrine of the Church with recitation of the words of *Gennadius, I perſuade and exhort Chriſtians to receive the Communion every Lord's day; but ſo, that if their mind be free from all affection of ſinning: For he who ſtill hath will or deſires of ſin, he is burdened and not purified, by receiving the Euchariſt. And therefore although he be bitten,* or grieved, *with ſin, let him for the future renounce all will to ſin, and before he communicate let him ſatisfy with prayers and tears; and being confident of the mercy of our Lord, who uſes to pardon ſins upon a pious confeſſion, let him come to the Euchariſt without doubting. But this I ſay of him, who is not preſſed with capital and deadly ſins; for ſuch a perſon, if he will not receive the Euchariſt to judgment and condemnation, let him make amends by public penance, and being reconciled by the Biſhop or Prieſt, let him communicate. I doubt not alſo but ſuch grievous ſins may be extinguiſhed by private ſatisfactions; but this muſt be done by changing the courſe of his life, by a profeſſed ſtudy of Religion, by a daily and perpetual mourning or contrition, that through the mercy of God he may do things contrary to theſe whereof he does repent; and then humbly and ſuppliant let him every Lord's day Communicate to the end of his life.*

This advice of *Gennadius* declares the ſentiment of the Church, that none muſt communicate till

they have worthily repented, and in the way of piety and contrition made amends for their faults as well as they may; and have put themſelves into a ſtate of virtue contrary to their ſtate of ſin, that is, have made progreſſion in the reformation of their lives; that they are really changed and become new men, not in purpoſe only, but actually, and in the commencement of holy habits. And therefore it is remarkable, that he adviſes, that theſe perſons who do not ſtand in the place of public penitents, ſhould upon the Commiſſion of grievous faults enter into Religion; he means into ſolitude, and retirement, and renunciation of the world, that by attending wholly to the ſeverities and purities of a Religious life, they may by ſuch ſtrictneſſes and conſtant piety be fitted for the Communion. Now whatever ends beſides this the Divine Providence might have, yet it is not to be neglected, that when the ancient Diſcipline of the Church, of public penances and ſatisfactions was gone into deſuetude, the *Spirit of Religion* entered more fully into the world, and many Religious Orders and Houſes were inſtituted, that at leaſt *there*, the world might practiſe that ſeverity in private, which the change of affairs in the face of the Church had taken from the public miniſtries; Penance went from the Churches into Deſerts and into Monaſteries; but when theſe were corrupted, and the manners of men were worſe corrupted, it is hard to ſay whither it is gone now. It may be yet done in private, and under the hand of a ſpiritual guide; or by the ſpirit of penance in the heart of a good man,

and by the conduct of a wiſe counſellor; but beſides that the manners of men are corrupted: the doctrines alſo are made ſo eaſy, and the Communion given to Sects and Opinions, or indifferently to all; that it is very rare to ſee them who have ſinned grievouſly repent worthily, who therefore can never be worthy Communicants; for no impenitents can partake of Chriſt, who, as St. *Hierom* calls him, *is the Prince of penance, and the head of them who by repentance come unto ſalvation.* But this was his advice to them that commit grievous ſins, ſuch which lay the conſcience waſte, and whoſe every ſingle action deſtroys our being in the ſtate of grace.

But as for them, whoſe ſins are but thoſe of daily incurſion, and of infirmity, or imperfection, ſuch which a great diligence, and a perpetual watchfulneſs might have prevented, but an ordinary care would not; theſe muſt be proteſted againſt, they muſt not join with our conſent, our will muſt be againſt them, and they muſt be confeſſed and deplored, and prayed againſt before we communicate. This is the ſenſe of the Church of God.

Having eſtabliſhed this great general meaſure of preparation, it will not be very difficult to anſwer that great queſtion often diſputed amongſt ſpiritual perſons, *viz.*

Queſtion I.—*Whether it is better to communicate ſeldom or frequently?*

To this I anſwer, That it is without peradventure very much better to receive it every day, than every week; and better every week, than every month: *Chriſtiani omni die carnes agni comedunt*, ſaid *Origen*, Chriſtians every day eat of the fleſh of the ſacrificed Lamb. And St. *Baſil* expreſſly affirms, that *to communicate every day, and to partake of the body and blood of Chriſt, is excellent and very profitable; Chriſt himſelf having manifeſtly ſaid it, He that eats my fleſh, and drinks my blood, hath life eternal.* For if the Sacrament does no benefit to ſouls, and produces no bleſſings, then a man can inſtitute a Sacrament: for he may appoint anything that ſhall be good for nothing. But if it be an inſtrument in the hand of God to procure bleſſings to us, and ſpiritual emolument, if it be a means of union with Chriſt, who would not willingly live with him, and converſe with him for ever? It is good to be with Chriſt; and St. *Hierom* ſaid, *I would to God that we could always receive with a pure conſcience, and without ſelf-condemnation.* It is without diſpute, that it is better to be with Chriſt, in all the ways of being with him, than to be away from him one hour. This therefore ought to be no part to the queſtion.

But becauſe there is more required to the receiving Chriſt, than eating the Symbols, and a man may eat to his condemnation, and increaſe

his ſins, and ſwell his ſad accounts, and be guilty of Chriſt's body and blood, if he does not take heed; therefore firſt, men muſt be prepared, and be in the ſtate of holineſs, or elſe they may not receive at all; and they that are ſo, may receive it frequently, the oftener the better. So *Hierom* and St. *Auſtin* tell, That even till their days the cuſtom of receiving every day remained in the Churches of *Rome* and *Spain*; and all the ancient Fathers exhort to a frequent communion; but juſt as Phyſicians exhort men to eat the beſt and heartieſt meats; not the ſickly and the infant, but the ſtrong man and the healthful. And this we find thus determined by St. *Chryſoſtom*, *There are ſome living in deſerts, who receive but once in a year, or it may be once in two years: what then? whom ſhall we account beſt of? them that receive but once, or that receive but ſeldom, or that receive frequently? Neither one, nor the other:* But them that communicate with a ſincere conſcience, with a pure heart, and an unreprovable life. *They that are ſo, let them always communicate: and they that are not ſo, let them not approach ſo much as once; becauſe they do nothing but draw upon themſelves the judgments of God, and make themſelves worthy of condemnation*, To which if we add the excellent diſcourſe of St. *Auſtin* in this queſtion, the conſequents of it may ſuffice to determine the whole enquiry. *Some will ſay, that the Euchariſt is not to be received every day. If you aſk why? he tells you; becauſe ſome days are to be choſen in which a man may live more purely and continently, that ſo he may come to ſo great a Sacrament*

*more worthily, becauſe he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himſelf. On the other ſide, another ſays; if thou haſt received ſo great a wound, and contracted ſo violent a diſeaſe, that ſuch remedies are to be deferred, every ſuch man ought by the authority of the Biſhop to be removed from the Altar and put to penance, and by the ſame authority be reconciled. For this is to receive unworthily, then to receive when a man ſhould be doing penance, and not according to his own pleaſure offer himſelf to, or withdraw himſelf from the Communion. But if his ſins be not ſo great, as to deſerve excommunication, he ought not to ſeparate himſelf from the daily medicine of the Lord's Body. Between theſe, poſſibly a man may determine the queſtion better; if he admoniſhes that men ſhould abide in the peace of Chriſt. But let every one do what according to his faith he piouſly believes ought to be done. For neither of them diſhonours the body and blood of the Lord, if they in their ſeveral ways contend who ſhall moſt honour the moſt holy Sacrament. For* Zaccheus *and the* Centurion *did not prefer themſelves before one another, when the one received Chriſt into his houſe, and the other ſaid he was not worthy to receive him under his roof; both of them honouring our bleſſed Saviour by a divers, and almoſt a contrary way, both of them were miſerable by ſins, and both of them obtained mercy.* Now from the words of theſe two Saints put together, we may collect theſe reſolutions.

1. The queſtion does no way concern evil men, deſperately or greatly wicked; for they ſo remaining or committing ſuch ſins, *quæ non committit*

*omnis bonæ fidei ſpeique Chriſtianus;* which exclude men from the kingdom of heaven, and cannot ſtand with the hopes of a good man, are ſeparate from the Spirit of the Lord, and ought not to touch the body of our Lord.

2. Neither does it concern ſuch imperfect perſons, and half Chriſtians, who endeavour to accord the rules of the Goſpel with their irregular and ruling paſſions; who would enter into heaven, and yet keep their affections for earth and earthly intereſts; who part ſtakes between God and the world, and reſolve to ſerve two Maſters, who commit oftentimes deliberate and great ſins, and repent, and yet ſin again when the temptation comes; for they are yet very far from the Kingdom of God, and therefore ought not to be admitted to the portion of Sons, and the bread of Children.

3. It concerns only ſuch, whoſe life does not diſhonour their profeſſion; who pretend to be ſervants of Chriſt, and indeed are ſo in great truth; whoſe faith is ſtrengthened with hope, and their hope animated with charity, who cannot pretend to be more perfect than men, yet really contend to avoid all ſin, like the children of God, who have right to be nouriſhed by the body of the Lord, *Corpus Chriſti, quod ipſi ſunt*, becauſe they are indeed members of his body, and joined in the ſame ſpirit. The queſtion is not between the Publican and the Phariſee, but between the converted Publican, and the proſelyte Centurion; between two perſons who are both true honourers of Chriſt, and penitent ſinners, and humbled perſons, and have

no affection for ſin remaining: The queſtion then is, which is more to be commended; he that out of love receives Chriſt, or he who out of humility and reverence abſtains, becauſe he thinks himſelf not worthy enough? To this St. *Chryſoſtom* anſwers.

4. They that are ſuch, have a right to receive every day; and becauſe they are rightly diſpoſed, it is certain that a frequent Communion is of great advantage to them, and therefore they that frequent it not, are like to be loſers: For this is the daily bread, the heavenly ſuperſubſtantial bread, by which our ſouls are nouriſhed to life eternal. This is the medicine againſt our daily imperfections and intrudings of leſſer crimes, and ſudden emigration of paſſions: it is the great conſignation of pardon; and St. *Ambroſe* argues well; *If Chriſt's blood is poured forth for the remiſſion of ſins; then I ought, as often as I can, receive it when it is poured forth to me, that becauſe I ſin often, I may perpetually have my remedy.* Which diſcourſe of his, is only to be underſtood of thoſe imperfections of our life which perpetually haunt thoſe good men who are growing in grace, until they come to perfection and conſummation in grace.

5. They that in conſcience of their paſt ſins, and apprehenſion of their repentance, do abſtain for fear of irreverence and the ſentence of condemnation; do very well as long as they find that their ſin returns often, or tempts ſtrongly, or prevails dangerouſly; and becauſe our returns to God and the mortifications of ſin are diviſible, and done by

parts and many ſteps of progreſſion; they that delay their Communion that they may be ſurer, do very well, provided that they do not ſtay too long; that is, that their fear do not turn to timorouſneſs, their Religion do not change into ſuperſtition; their diſtruſt of themſelves into a jealouſy of God; their apprehenſion of the greatneſs of their ſin into a ſecret diffidence of the greatneſs of the Divine mercy. And therefore in the firſt converſions of a Sinner, this reverence may be longer allowed to a good man, than afterwards. But it muſt be no longer allowed, than till he hath once communicated. For if he hath once been partaker of the Divine Myſteries ſince his repentance, he muſt no longer forbear; for in this caſe it is true, that *he who is not fit to receive every day, is fit to receive no day*. If he thinks that he ought wholly to abſtain, let him uſe his caution and his fear to the advantages of his repentance, and the heightening of his longings; but if he may *ſafely* come once, he may *piouſly* come often. He cannot long ſtand at this diſtance, if he be the man he is ſuppoſed: But for the time of his total abſtention, let him be conducted by a ſpiritual guide, whom he may ſafely truſt. For if he cannot by the uſual methods of repentance, and the known Sermons of the Goſpel, be reduced to peace, and a quiet conſcience, let him declare his eſtate to a ſpiritual Guide, and if he thinks it fit to abſolve him, that is, to declare him to be in the ſtate of grace and pardon; it is all the warrant which, with the teſtimony of God's Spirit, bearing witneſs to our ſpirit, we can expect

in this world. I remember what a religious perſon ſaid to *Petrus Celeſtinus*, who was a great Saint, but of a timorous conſcience in this particular: Thou abſtaineſt from the bleſſed Sacrament, becauſe it is a thing ſo ſacred and formidable, that thou canſt not think thyſelf worthy of it. Well, ſuppoſe that. But, I pray, who is worthy? is an Angel worthy enough? No certainly, if we conſider the greatneſs of the myſtery. But conſider the goodneſs of God, and the uſual meaſures of good men, and the commands of Chriſt inviting us to come, and commanding us, and then, *Cum timore & reverentia frequenter operare;* Receive it often with fear and reverence. To which purpoſe, theſe two things are fit to be conſidered.

1. Suppoſing this fear and reverence to be good and commendable in his caſe, who really is fit to communicate, but does not think ſo; yet if we compare it with that grace, which prompts a good man to take it often, we may quickly perceive which is beſt. Certainly that act is in its own nature beſt, which proceeds from the beſt and the moſt perfect grace; but to abſtain, proceeds from fear; and to come frequently, being worthily diſpoſed, is certainly the product of love and holy hunger, the effect of the good Spirit, who by his holy fires, makes us to thirſt after the waters of ſalvation. As much then as love is better than fear, ſo much it is to be preferred, that true penitents, and well grown Chriſtians ſhould frequently addreſs themſelves to theſe Sacramental unions with their Lord.

2. The frequent uſe of this Divine Sacrament proceeds from more, as well as from more noble virtues. For here is obedience and zeal, worſhip and love, thankſgiving and oblation, devotion and joy, holy hunger and holy thirſt, an approach to God in the ways of God, union and adherence, confidence in the Divine goodneſs, and not only hope of pardon, but a going to receive it; and the omiſſion of all theſe excellencies, cannot in the preſent caſe, be recompenſed by an act of religious fear: For this can but by accident, and upon ſuppoſition of ſomething that is amiſs, be at all accounted good, and therefore ought to give place to that, which ſuppoſing all things to be as they ought, is directly good, and an obedience to a Divine Commandment.

For we may not deceive ourſelves: the matter is not ſo indifferent, as to be excuſed by every fair pretence: It is unlawful for any man unprepared by repentance and its fruits to communicate; but it is neceſſary that we ſhould be prepared that we may come. *For plague and death threaten them that do not communicate in this myſterious banquet;* as certainly as danger is to them who come unduly, and as it happens. For *the Sacrament of the Lord's body is commanded to all men,* ſaith *Tertullian.* And it is very remarkable what St. *Auſtin* ſaid in this affair, *The force of the Sacraments is of an unſpeakable value, and therefore it is Sacrilege to deſpiſe it. For that is impiouſly deſpiſed, without which we cannot come to the perfection of piety.* So that although it is not in all caſes the mere not receiving that is

to be blamed, but the deſpiſing it; yet when we conſider, that by this means we arrive at perfection, all cauſeleſs recuſancy, is next to contempt by interpretation.

One thing more I am to add, whereas ſome perſons abſtain from a frequent Communion for fear, leſt by frequency of receiving they ſhould leſs eſteem the Divine Myſteries, and fall into lukewarmneſs and indevotion; the conſideration is good: and ſuch perſons indeed may not receive it often, but not for that reaſon; but becauſe they are not fit to receive it at all. For whoever grows worſe by the Sacrament, as *Judas* after the Sop, hath an evil ſpirit within him; for this being by the deſign of God a ſavour of life, it is the fault of the receiver if it paſſes into death, and diminution of the ſpiritual life. He therefore that grows leſs devout, and leſs holy, and leſs reverent, muſt ſtart back and take Phyſick, and throw out the evil ſpirit that is within him; for there is a worm in the heart of the tree, a peccant humour in the ſtomach, it could not be elſe, that this Divine nutriment ſhould make him ſick.

Queſtion II.—*But is every man bound to communicate that is preſent, or that comes into a Church where the Communion is prepared, though but by accident, and without deſign; and may no man that is fit, omit to communicate in every opportunity?*

To this I anſwer, That in the Primitive Church it was accounted ſcandalous and criminal to be pre-

ſent at the holy Offices, and to go out at the celebration of the Myſteries, *What cauſe is there, O Hearers! that ye ſee the Table, and come not to the Banquet?* ſaid St. *Auſtin. If thou ſtand by, and do not communicate, thou art wicked, thou art ſhameleſs, thou art impudent.* So St. *Chryſoſtom:* and to him that objects, he is not worthy to Communicate, he anſwers, that then neither is he fit to pray. And the Council of *Antioch* and of *Bracara* commanded that thoſe who did not communicate ſhould be driven from the Churches. And *Palladius* tells, that when St. *Macarius* had by his prayers cured a poor miſerable woman that was bewitched, and fancied herſelf to be a Horſe; he adviſed her, *Never to depart from the Church of God, or to abſtain from the Communion of the Sacraments of Chriſt. For this misfortune hath prevailed upon you, becauſe for theſe five weeks you have not communicated.*

Now this was but a relative crime; and becauſe their cuſtom was ſuch; which is always to be underſtood according to their acknowledged meaſures, *viz.* that only pious perſons were to be meant and required in that expectation; this will not conclude that of itſelf, and abſtracting from the ſcandal, it was in all caſes unlawful to recede from the myſteries at ſome times. For ſometimes a man may be called off by the neceſſities of his calling, or the duties of charity or piety. A General of an Army, a Prince, a Privy Councillor, a Judge, a Merchant may be very unfit to Communicate, even when they cannot, or it may be ought not to ſtay. But if he can ſtay, and be a good man, and

rightly diſpoſed by the habits of a good life, he ought to ſtay and communicate; and ſo much the rather, if it be in any degree ſcandalous to go away. The reaſon is, becauſe if he be a good man, he can no more be ſurpriſed by an unexpected Communion, than by a ſudden death; which although it may find him in better circumſtances, yet can never find him unprovided. But in this caſe, St. *Auſtin's* moderate determination of the caſe is very uſeful, *Let every one do as he is perſuaded in his mind;* for a man may with a laudable fear and reverence abſtain; if he ſhall be perſuaded that he ought not to communicate, unleſs, beſides his habitual grace, he hath kindled the fires of an actual devotion and preparation ſpecial: and ſo much the rather, becauſe he may communicate very frequently, and to great purpoſes and degrees of a ſpiritual life, though he omit that ſingle opportunity in which he is ſurpriſed; and though it be very uſeful for a good man to communicate often, yet it is not neceſſary that he communicate always; only let every pious ſoul conſider, that it is an argument of the Divine love to us, that theſe fountains are always open; that the Angel frequently moves theſe waters, and that Chriſt ſays to every prepared heart as to the multitudes that followed him into the wilderneſs, *I will not ſend them away faſting, leſt they faint in the way.* And if Chriſt be ever ready offering his holy body and blood, it were very fit we ſhould entertain him: for he never comes but he brings a bleſſing.

Queſtion III.— *But how often is it adviſable that a good man ſhould Communicate? Once in a year, or thrice, or every month, or every fortnight; every Sunday, or every day?*

This queſtion hath troubled very many; but to little purpoſe. For it is all one as if it were aſked, *How often ſhould a healthful man eat; or he that hath infirmities take Phyſic?* And if any man ſhould ſay, that *a good man ſhould do well to pray three times a day;* he ſaid true; and yet it were better to pray five times, and better to pray ſeven times; but if he does, yet muſt leave ſpaces for other duties. But his beſt meaſures for public and ſolemn Prayer, is the cuſtom of the Church in which he lives; and for private, he can take no meaſures but his own needs, and his own leiſure, and his own deſires, and the examples of the Beſt and devouteſt perſons, in the ſame circumſtances. And ſo it is in the frequenting the holy Communion. *The Laws of the Church muſt be his leaſt meaſure. The cuſtom of the Church may be his uſual meaſure;* but if he be a devout perſon, *the ſpirit of devotion will be his certain meaſure;* and although that will conſult with prudence and reaſonable opportunities, yet it conſults with nothing elſe; but communicates by its own heights and degrees of excellency. St. *Hierom* adviſes *Euſtochium*, a noble Virgin, and other religious perſons, to communicate twice every month; ſome did every Sunday; and this was ſo general a cuſtom in the Ancient Church, that the

Sunday was called, *The day of Bread*, as we find in St. *Chryſoſtom*, and in conſonancy to this, the Church of *England* commands that the Prieſts reſident in Collegiate or Cathedral Churches ſhould do ſo; and they, whoſe work and daily employment is to Miniſter to Religion, cannot in ſuch circumſtances pretend a reaſonable excuſe to the contrary. But I deſire theſe things may be obſerved.

1. That when the Fathers make a queſtion concerning a frequent Communion, they do not diſpute whether it be adviſable, that good people ſhould communicate every month, or every fortnight, or whether the more devout, or leſs employed, may Communicate every week; for of this they make no queſtion: but whether every day's Communion be fit to be adviſed, that they queſtion. And I find, that as they are not earneſt in that, ſo they indefinitely give anſwer, that a frequent Communion is not to be neglected at any hand, if perſons be worthily prepared.

2. The frequency of Communion is to be eſtimated by the meaſures of devout people in every Church reſpectively. And although in the Apoſtolical Ages, they who communicated but once a fortnight, were not eſteemed to do it frequently; yet now, they who communicate every month, and upon the great Feſtivals of the year beſides, and upon other ſolemn and contingent occaſions, and at marriages, and at viſitations of the ſick, may be ſaid to communicate frequently, in ſuch Churches where the Laws enjoin but three or four times

every year, as in the Church of *England*, and the *Lutheran* Churches. But this way of eſtimating the frequency of communion, is only when the cauſes of inquiry are for the avoiding of ſcandal, or the preventing of ſcruples; but elſe the inward hunger and thirſt, and the ſpirit of devotion married to opportunity, can give the trueſt meaſures.

3. They that communicate frequently, if they do it worthily, are charitable and ſpiritual perſons, and therefore cannot judge or undervalue others that do not. For no man knows concerning others, by what ſecret principles and imperfect propoſitions they are guided. For although theſe meaſures we meet with in antiquity are very unreaſonable, yet few do know them; and all of them do not rely upon them, and their own cuſtoms, or the private word of their own guides, or their fears, or the uſages of the Church in which they live, or ſome leading example, or ſome ſecret impediment which ought not, but is thought ſufficient; any of theſe, or many other things, may retard even good perſons from ſuch a frequency as may pleaſe others; and that which one calls opportunity, others do not; but however, no man ought to be prejudiced in the opinion of others: For beſides all this now reckoned, the receiving of the holy Sacrament is of that nature of good things, which can be ſupplied by internal actions alone, or ſometimes by other external actions in conjunction; and it hath a ſuppletory of its own, *viz. Spiritual Communion* (of which I am to give account in its proper place). And when we con-

ſider, that ſome men are of ſtrict conſciences, and ſome Churches are of ſtrict Communions, and will not admit Communicants but upon ſuch terms, which ſome men cannot admit, it will follow, that as St. *Auſtin's* expreſſion is, *Men ſhould live in the peace of Chriſt, and do according to their faith:* but that in theſe things no man ſhould judge his Brother. In this no man can directly be ſaid to do amiſs, but he that loaths Manna, and deſpiſes the food of Angels, or neglects the Supper of the Lamb, or will not quit his ſin, or contend towards perfection, or hath not the ſpirit of devotion, or does any way by implication ſay, *That the Table of the Lord is contemptible.*

4. Theſe rules and meaſures now given, are ſuch as relate to thoſe, who by themſelves or others are diſcernibly in, or diſcernibly out of the ſtate of grace. But there are ſome, which are in the confines of both ſtates, and neither themſelves, nor their guides, can tell to what dominion they do belong. Concerning ſuch, they are by all means to be thruſt or invited forward, and told of the danger of a real or ſeeming neutrality in the ſervice of God; of the hatefulneſs of tepidity, of the uncomfortableneſs of ſuch an indifference: and for the Communions of any ſuch perſon, I can give no other advice: but that he take his meaſures of frequency by the laws of his Church, and add what he pleaſe to his numbers by the advice of a ſpiritual guide, who may conſider whether his penitent, by his conjugation of preparatory actions, and heaps of holy duties at that time

uſually conjoined, do, or is likely to receive any ſpiritual progreſs: For this will be his beſt indication of life, and declare his uncertain ſtate, if he thrive upon this ſpiritual nouriſhment. If it prove otherwiſe, all that can be ſaid of ſuch perſons is, that they are members of the viſible Church, they are in that Net, where there are fiſhes good and bad, they ſtand amongſt the wheat and the tares, they are part of the lump, but whether leavened or unleavened, God only knows; and therefore they are ſuch, to whom the Church denies not the bread of Children; but whether it does them good or hurt, *the day* only will declare: for to ſuch perſons as theſe, the Church hath made Laws for the ſet time of their Communion: *Chriſtmas*, *Eaſter*, and *Whitſuntide* were appointed for all Chriſtians that were not ſcandalous and openly criminal, by *P. Fabianus;* and this Conſtitution is imitated by the beſt conſtituted Church in the world, our dear Mother the Church of *England*: and they who do not at theſe times, or ſo *frequently* communicate, are cenſured by the Council of *Agathon*, as unfit to be reckoned among Chriſtians, or Members of the Catholic Church. Now by theſe Laws of the Church, it is intended indeed, that all men ſhould be called upon to diſcuſs and ſhake off the yoke of their ſins, and enter into the ſalutary ſtate of repentance; and next to the perpetual Sermons of the Church, ſhe had no better means to engage them into returns of piety; hoping, that by the grace of God, and the bleſſings of the Sacrament, the repentance which at theſe times ſolemnly be-

gins, may at one time or other fix and abide; theſe little inſtitutions and diſciplines, being like the ſudden heats in the body, which ſometimes fix into a burning, though moſt commonly they go away without any further change. But the Church in this caſe does the beſt ſhe can, but does not preſume that things are well; and indeed as yet they are not; and therefore ſuch perſons muſt paſs further, or elſe their hopes may become illuſions, and make the men aſhamed.

5. I find that amongſt the holy Primitives, they who contended for the beſt things, and loved God greatly, were curious even of little things; and if they were ſurpriſed with any ſudden undecency, or a ſtorm of paſſion, they did not dare that day to communicate. *When I am angry, or when I think any evil thought, or am abuſed with any illuſion or foul phanſy of the night*, intrare non audeo, *I dare not enter*, ſaid St. *Jerome*, *I am ſo full of horror and dread, both in my body and my mind.* This was alſo the caſe of St. *Chryſoſtom*, who when *Euſebius* had unreaſonably troubled him with an unſeaſonable demand of juſtice againſt *Antonine*, juſt as he was going to conſecrate the bleſſed Sacrament, departed out of the Church, and deſired one of the Biſhops, who by chance was preſent, to do the office for him; for *he would not offer the Sacrifice at that time, having ſome trouble in his ſpirit.*

2. To this are to be reduced all ſuch great actions, which in their whole conſtitution are great and lawful; but becauſe ſo many things are involved in their tranſaction, whereof ſome unavoid-

ably will be amiſs, or may reaſonably be ſuppoſed ſo, may have ſomething in the whole, and at the laſt to be deplored: In ſuch caſes as theſe ſome great examples have been of advices to abſtain from the Communion, till, by a general, but a profound repentance for what hath been amiſs, God is deprecated, and the cauſe of Chriſtian hope and confidence do return. In the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory we read, that when *Theodoſius* had fought proſperouſly againſt *Eugenius* the Uſurper of the Empire, when his cauſe was juſt and approved by God, not only giving teſtimony by the prediction and warranty of a religious Hermit, but alſo by prodigious events, by winds and tempeſts fighting for him, and by which he reſtored peace to the Church, and tranquillity to the Empire: yet he, by the advice of St. *Ambroſe*, abſtained awhile from the holy Sacrament, and would not carry blood upon his hands, though juſtly ſhed, unto the Altars; not only following the precedent of *David*, who becauſe he was a man of blood, might not build the Temple, but for fear leſt ſome unfit appendage ſhould ſtick to the management of a juſt employment.

3. Of the ſame conſideration it is, if a perſon whoſe life ſhould be very exemplar, is guilty of ſuch a ſingle folly, which it may be would not diſhonour a meaner man, but is a great vanity and reproach to him; a little abſtention, and a penitential ſeparation (when it is quit from ſcandal) was ſometimes practiſed in the ancient Church, and is adviſable alſo now in fitting circumſtances.

Thus when *Gerontius* the Deacon had vainly talked that the Devil appeared to him one night, and that he had bound him with a chain, St. *Ambroſe* commanded him to abide in his houſe, and not to come to the Church, till by penances and ſorrow he had expiated ſuch an indiſcretion, which to a man, had in reputation for wiſdom, is as a fly in a box of ointment, not only uſeleſs, but miſchievous. And St. *Bernard* commends St. *Malachy*, becauſe he reproved a Deacon for attending at the Altar the day after he had ſuffered an illuſion in the night. It had been better he had abſtained from the Altar one day, and by that intermediate expiation and humility, have the next day returned to a more worthy miniſtry.

4. One degree of curious caution I find beyond all this in an inſtance of St. *Gregory* the Great, in whoſe life we find, that he abſtained ſome days from the holy Communion, becauſe there was found in a Village near *Rome* a poor man dead, no man could tell how; but becauſe the good Biſhop feared he might have been ſtarved, and that he died for want of proviſion; he ſuppoſing it might reflect upon him, as a defect in his Government, or of his perſonal Charity, thought it fit to deplore the accident; and to abſtain from the Communion, till he might hope for pardon, in caſe he had done amiſs.

If theſe things proceed from the ſincerity of a well-diſpoſed ſpirit, that can ſuffer any trouble, rather than that of ſin, the product is well enough, and in all likelihood would always be well, if the

caſe were conducted by a prudent ſpiritual guide; for then it would not change into ſcruples and ſuperſtition. But theſe are but the fears, and cautions, and ſecurities of a tender ſpirit; but are not an anſwer to the Queſtion, *Whether it be lawful for ſuch perſons to Communicate?* For certainly they may, if all things elſe be right; and they may be right in the midſt of ſuch little accidents. But theſe belong to the queſtions of perfection and excellencies of grace; theſe are the extraordinaries of them, who never think they do well enough: and therefore they extend no farther than to a ſingle abſtention, or ſome little proportionable retirement; and may be uſeful when they are in the hands of prudent and excellent perſons.

## Section V.—*What ſignifications of Repentance are to be accepted by the Church in admiſſion of Penitents to the Communion.*

THIS inquiry will quickly be anſwered, when we conſider that the end, why the Church enjoins public or private amends reſpectively to any convict or confeſſed Criminal, ſhe only does it as a Mother and Phyſician to ſouls, and a Miniſter of the Divine pardon, and the Conductreſs of penitential Proceſſes: ſhe does it, that the man may be recovered from the ſnare of the enemy, that ſhe may deſtroy the work of the Devil, that the ſinner may become a good Chriſtian: and

therefore the Church, when ſhe conducts any man's repentance, is bound to enjoin ſo many external Miniſtries, that if they be really joined with the internal contrition and reformation, will do the work of reconcilement in the Court of Heaven. The Church can exact none, but what ſhe can ſee or ſome way take external notice of; but by theſe externals, intends to miniſter to the internal repentance; which when it is ſufficiently ſignified by any ways that ſhe may preſently rely upon, as teſtimonies and miniſtries of a ſufficient internal contrition and real amends, ſhe can require no more, and ſhe ought not to be content with leſs.

It is therefore infinitely unſafe and imprudent to receive the confeſſions of criminals, and after the injunction of certain curſory penances, to admit them to the Bleſſed Sacrament, without any farther emendation, without any trial of the ſincerity of their converſion, before it is probable that God hath pardoned them, before their affections to ſin are dead, before the ſpirit of mortification is entered, before any vice is exterminated, or any virtue acquired: Such a looſeneſs of diſcipline is but the image of repentance (whether we look upon it as it is deſcribed in Scripture, or as it was practiſed by the Primitive Church) which at leaſt is a whole change of life, a converſion of the whole man to God. And it is as bad, when a notorious criminal is put to ſhame one day, for ſuch a ſin which could not have obtained the peace of the Church, under the ſeverity and ſtrictneſs of fifteen years, amongſt the holy Primitives. Such public

Eccleſiaſtical penances may ſuffice to remove the ſcandal from the Church, when the Church will be content upon ſo eaſy terms; for ſhe only can tell what will pleaſe herſelf. But then ſuch diſcipline muſt not be eſteemed a ſufficient miniſtry of repentance, nor a juſt diſpoſition to pardon. For the Church ought not to give pardon, or to promiſe the peace of God upon eaſier terms than God himſelf requires; and therefore when repentance comes to be conducted by her, ſhe muſt require ſo much as will extinguiſh the ſin, and reform the man, and make him and repreſent him good.

All the liberty that the Church hath in this, is what is given her by the latitude of the judgment of charity; and yet oftentimes a too eaſy judgment is the greateſt uncharitableneſs in the world, and makes men confident, and careleſs, and deceived: and therefore, although gentle ſentences are uſeful, when there is danger of deſpair or contumacy, yet that is rather a palliation of a diſeaſe than a cure; and therefore the method muſt be changed as ſoon as it can, and the ſevere and true Sermons of the Goſpel muſt be either proclaimed aloud, or inſinuated prudently and ſecretly, and men be taught to rely upon them and their conſequents, and upon nothing elſe: for they will not deceive us. But the corrupt manners of men, and the corrupt doctrines of ſome Schools, have made it almoſt impoſſible to govern ſouls as they need to be governed.

The Church may indeed chooſe whether ſhe will impoſe on Criminals any exterior ſignifications

of repentance, but accept them to the Communion upon their own accounts, of a ſincere converſion and inward contrition; but then ſhe ought to do this upon ſuch accounts, as are indeed real and ſufficient, and effective and allowed; that is, when ſhe can underſtand that ſuch an emendation is made, and the man is really reformed, ſhe can pronounce him pardoned; or, which is all one, ſhe may communicate him. And farther yet, ſhe can by Sermons declare all the neceſſary parts of repentance, and the conditions of pardon, and can pronounce limited and hypothetical or conditional pardons; concerning which, the penitent muſt take care that they do belong to him. But if ſhe does undertake to conduct any repentances exteriouſly, it is to very little purpoſe to any way, that is not commenſurate to that true internal repentance, which is effective of pardon. Indeed every ſingle act of penance does ſomething towards it; but why ſomething ſhould be enjoined that is not ſufficient, and that falls infinitely ſhort of the end of its deſignation, though the church may uſe her liberty, yet it is not eaſy to underſtand the reaſon. But I leave this to the conſideration of thoſe who are concerned in Governments public, or in the private conduct of ſouls, to whom I earneſtly and humbly recommend it; and I add this only, that when the ancient Churches did abſolve and communicate dying penitents, though but newly returned from ſin, they did it *de bene eſſe*, or with a hope that it might do ſome good, and becauſe they thought it a caſe of neceſſity, and becauſe there was no time left to do

better; but when they did as well as they could, they could not tell what God would do; and though the Church did well, it may be it was very ill with the ſouls departed. But becauſe that is left to God, it is certain ſome things were done upon pious confidence and venture for which there was no promiſe in the Goſpel.

That which the Church is to take care of is, that all her Children be ſufficiently taught, what are the juſt meaſures of preparation and worthy diſpoſition to theſe divine Myſteries; and that ſhe admits none, of whom ſhe can tell that they are not worthy; ſuch as are notorious adulterers, homicides, inceſtuous, perjurers, habitually peeviſh to evil effects, and permanently angry (for this I find reckoned amongſt the Primitive Catalogues of perſons to be excluded from the Communion) rapines, theft, ſacrilege, falſe-witneſs, pride, covetouſneſs, and envy. It would be hard to reduce this rule to practice in all theſe inſtances, unleſs it be by conſent and voluntary ſubmiſſion of penitent perſons. But that which I remark is this: that proud perſons and the covetous, the envious and the angry, were eſteemed fit to be excommunicate: that is, infinitely unfit to be admitted to the bleſſed Sacrament; and that by the rules of their diſcipline, they were to do many actions of public and ſevere penance and mortifications, before they would admit them.

Now then the caſe is this: They did eſteem more things to be required to the integrity of repentance, and God not to be ſo ſoon reconciled,

and the devil not ſo ſoon diſpoſſeſſed, and men's reſolutions not ſo fit to be truſted, and more to be required to pardon than confeſſion, and the pronouncing abſolution; all this is otherwiſe, than we do, and therefore ſo long as they did conduct repentances, they required it as it ſhould be; being ſure that no repentance that was joined with hope and charity, could be too much, but it might quickly be too little; and therefore although the Church may take as little as ſhe pleaſe for a teſtimonial of repentance, and ſuppoſe the reſt is right, though it be not ſignified; yet when ſhe, either in public or in private is to manage repentances, ſhe muſt uſe no meaſure, but that which will procure pardon, and extinguiſh both the guilt and dominion of ſin. The firſt may be of ſome uſe in government, but of little avail to ſouls, and to their eternal intereſt: therefore in the firſt, ſhe may uſe her liberty, and give herſelf meaſures; in the latter, ſhe hath no other but what are given her by the nature of repentance, and its efficacy and order to pardon, and the deſigns of God, for the reformation of our ſouls, and the extermination of ſin.

SECTION VI.—*Whether may every Minister of the Church and Curate of Souls, reject impenitent persons, or any Criminals, from the holy Sacrament, until themselves be satisfied of their repentance and amends?*

SEPARATION of sinners from the blessed Sacrament, was either done upon confession and voluntary submission of the penitent; or by public conviction and notoriety. Every Minister of Religion can do the first, for he that submits to my judgment, does choose my sentence; and if he makes me judge, he is become my subject in a voluntary Government: and therefore I am to judge for him, when it is fit that he should communicate: only, if when he hath made me Judge, he refuses to obey my counsel, he hath dissolved my Government, and therefore will receive no further benefit by me. But concerning the latter of these, a separation upon public conviction or notoriety; that requires an authority that is not precarious and changeable. Now this is done two ways; either by Authority forbidding, or by Authority restraining and compelling; that is, by the word of our proper ministry, dissuading him that is unworthy from coming, and threatening him with Divine judgments if he does come; or else rejecting of him, in case that he fears not these threatenings, but persists in his desires of having it.

Now of the firſt of theſe, every Miniſter of the Word and Sacraments is a competent Miniſter; for all that miniſter to ſouls are to tell them of their dangers, and by all the effects of their Office, to preſent them pure and ſpotleſs unto God. The Seers muſt take care that the people may ſee, leſt by their blindneſs they fall into the bottomleſs Pit. And when the Curates of Souls have declared the will of God in this inſtance, and denounced his judgments to unworthy Communicants, and told to all that preſent themſelves, who are worthy, and who are not, they have delivered their own ſouls; all that remains, is, that every perſon take care concerning his own affairs.

For the ſecond, *viz.* denying to miniſter to criminals, though demanding it with importunity; that is an act of prudence and caution in ſome caſes, and of Authority in others. When it is a matter of caution, it is not a puniſhment, but a medicine; according to thoſe excellent words of St. *Cyprian; To be caſt out* (*viz.* for a time from the Communion) *is a remedy and degree towards the recovery of our ſpiritual health:* and becauſe it is no more; it cannot be pretended to be any man's *right* to do it; but it may be in *his duty* when he can; but therefore this muſt depend upon the conſent of the penitent. For a Phyſician muſt not, in deſpite of a man, cut off his leg to ſave his life; the ſick man may chooſe whether he ſhall or no. But ſometimes 'tis an act of authority; as when the people have conſented to ſuch a diſcipline, or when the ſecular arm, by aſſiſting the Eccleſiaſtical, hath

given to it a power of mixed juriſdiction; that is, when the ſpiritual power of paternal regimen which Chriſt hath given to his Miniſters the ſupreme Curates, is made operative upon the perſons and external ſocieties of Men. Now of this power the Biſhops are the prime and immediate ſubjects, partly under Chriſt, and partly under Kings; and of this power, inferior Miniſters are capable by delegation, but no otherwiſe; they being but Deputies and Vicars in the cure of ſouls, under their ſuperiors, from whom they have received their order and their charge. And thus I ſuppoſe we are to underſtand the Rubric before our Communion office; which warrants the Curate not to ſuffer *open and notorious* evil livers, by whom the Congregation is offended, and thoſe between whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign, to be partakers of the Lord's Table. In the firſt, the caſe is of notorious Criminals, and is to be underſtood of a notoriety of Law; and in this the Curate is but a publiſher of the *Judge's ſentence;* in the ſecond, the Criminal is *ipſo facto* excommunicate, and therefore in this the Curate is but the Miniſter of the *Sentence of the Law*, or at leaſt hath a delegate authority to paſs the Church's Sentence in a matter that is evident. But this is ſeldom practiſed otherwiſe, than by rejecting ſuch perſons by way of denunciation of the divine judgments; and if it be ſo underſtood, the Curate hath done his duty which God requires; and I believe the Laws of *England* will ſuffer him to do no more by his own authority.

But this is to be reduced to practice by the following meaſures.

1. Every man is to be preſumed fit, that is not known to be unfit; and that he is not a public Criminal, is not to be ſuppoſed unworthy to communicate. It may be he is; but that himſelf only knows, and he can only take care; but no man is to be prejudiced by imperfect and diſputable principles, by conjectures, and other men's meaſures, by the rules of Sects, and ſeparate Communities: And if a man may belong to God, and himſelf not know it, he may do ſo when his Curate knows it not.

2. No man may be ſeparated from the Communion for any private ſin, vehemently or lightly ſuſpected. This Cenſure muſt not paſs, but when the Crime is manifeſt and notorious; that is, when it is dilated and convict in any public Aſſembly, Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, or is evident to a multitude, or confeſſed. This is the expreſs Doctrine of the Church in St. *Auſtin's* time, who affirms, that the Eccleſiaſtics have no power to make *ſeparations* of ſinners, not confeſſed nor convict. And beſides many others, it relies upon this prudential conſideration, which *Linwood* hath well obſerved; *Every Chriſtian hath a right in the receiving the Euchariſt, unleſs he loſes it by deadly ſin: Therefore when it does not appear in the face of the Church, that ſuch an one hath loſt his right, it ought not in the face of the Church to be denied to him; otherwiſe a licenſe would be given to evil Prieſts, according to their pleaſure, with this puniſhment, to afflict whom they liſt.*

3. Every Sinner that hath been convict, or hath confeſſed, and affirms himſelf to be truly penitent, is to be believed, where by the Laws of the Church, he is not bound to paſs under any public diſcipline: For no man can tell, but that he ſays true; and becauſe every degree of Repentance is accepted to ſome diſpoſitions and proportions of pardon, and God hath not told us the juſt period of his being reconciled; and his mercy is diviſible as our return, and unknown to us; he that knows that without Repentance he eats damnation, and profeſſes upon that very account that he is penitent, may be taught as many more things as the Curate pleaſe, or as he is ſuppoſed to need; but muſt not be rejected from the Holy Communion, if he cannot be perſuaded. For this judgment is ſecret, and is to paſs between God and the Soul alone, for becauſe no man can tell, no man can judge; and the Curate, who knows not how it is, cannot give a definitive ſentence.

4. But if there come any accidental obligation upon Criminals; as if by the Laws of a Church, to which they are ſubjected, it be appointed they ſhall give public evidence and amends, they are to be judged by thoſe meaſures, and are not to be reſtored ordinarily, till they have by public meaſures proved their Repentance. This relies upon all thoſe grounds upon which obedience to Eccleſiaſtical Rulers is built.

5. It is lawful for the Guides of Souls to admit to the Communion ſuch perſons whom they believe not to be fit and worthily prepared, if they

will not be perſuaded to retire; It is evident in the caſe of Kings, and all ſupreme Powers and great Communities, and ſuch who being rejected, will be provoked into malice and perſecution. *Such indeed the Church ſometimes tolerates, leſt being provoked, they diſturb the people of God: but what does it profit them, not to be caſt out of the Aſſemblies of the godly, if they deſerve to be caſt out? To deſerve ejection is higheſt evil, and to no purpoſe he is mingled in the Congregations of the faithful, who is excluded from the Society of God, and the myſtical Body of Chriſt.* And it is alſo evident in the Societies of the Church, which we know by the words of Chriſt, and by experience, are a mixed multitude: And ſince the Scripture does not exempt a ſecret Sinner from the Communion, why wilt thou endeavour to except him? It is St. *Auſtin's* Argument. And who ſhall reject every man that he believes to be proud, or covetous, or envious? Who ſhall define pride, or convince a ſingle perſon of a proud heart, or of his latent envy? And who ſhall give rules by which every ſingle man that is to blame, can be convinced of covetouſneſs? If it be permitted to the diſcretion of the Pariſh-Prieſt, you erect a gibbet and a rack, by which he ſhall be enabled to torment any man, and you give him power to ſlander or reproach all his neighbours; if you go about to give him meaſures, you ſhall never do it wiſely or piouſly; for no rules can be ſufficient to convince any proud man; and if you make the Pariſh Curate Judge of theſe rules, you had as good leave it to his diſcretion; for he will

uſe them as he pleaſe: and after all, you ſhall never have all the people good, and if not, you ſhall certainly have them hypocrites; and therefore it cannot be avoided, but unfit perſons will be admitted: for ſince the Kingdom of Grace is within us, and God's choſen ones are his ſecret ones, and he only knows who are his, it will be ſtrange that viſible Sacraments ſhould be given only to an inviſible Society: and after all, if to communicate evil men be unavoidable, it cannot be unlawful.

I do not ſay that perſons unprepared may come; for they ought not, and if they do, they die for it; but I ſay, if they will come, it is at their peril, and to no man's prejudice but their own, if they be plainly and ſeverely admoniſhed of their duty and their danger; and therefore, that every man muſt judge of his own caſe, with very great ſeverity and fear, even then when the Guides of Souls muſt judge with more gentleneſs, and an eaſier charity; when we muſt ſuſpect our little faults to be worſe than they ſeem, and our negligences more inexcuſable, and fear a ſin when there is none, and are ready to accuſe ourſelves for every indiſcretion, and think no repentance great enough for the foulneſs of our ſins, at the ſame time when we judge for others, we ought to eſteem their certain good things, better than they do, and their certain evils leſs, and their diſputable good things certain, and their uncertain evils none at all, or very excuſable. And therefore it was to very great purpoſe, that the Apoſtle gave Command, that *every man ſhould examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat*, that is, let it be

done as it may be done thoroughly; let him do it whoſe caſe it is, and who is moſt concerned that it be done well; let it be done ſo, that it may not be allayed and leſſened by the judgment of charity; and therefore let a man do it himſelf: For when the Curate comes to do it, he cannot do it well, unleſs he do it with mercy; for he muſt make abatements, which the ſinner's caſe does not often need in order to his reconciliation and returns to God, where ſeverity is much better than gentle ſentences. But the Miniſter of Religion muſt receive in ſome caſes ſuch perſons, who ought not to come, and who ſhould abſtain, when themſelves give righteous judgment upon themſelves.

For if it be lawful for Chriſtian People to communicate with evil perſons, it is lawful for Chriſtian Prieſts to miniſter it; it being commanded to the people in ſome caſes to withdraw themſelves from a Brother that walks inordinately; but nowhere commanded, that a Miniſter of Religion ſhall refuſe to give it to him that requires it, and is within the Communion of the Church, and is not yet as an Heathen and a Publican: and it is evident, that in the Churches of *Corinth*, the Communion was given to perſons, who for unworthineſs fell under the Divine anger; and yet no man was reproved, but the unworthy Communicants, and themſelves only commanded to take care of it. For he that ſays, the people may not communicate with wicked Perſons, falls into the error of the Donatiſts, which St. *Auſtin*, and others, have infinitely confuted; but he that ſays, the people may,

ought not to deny but that the Prieſt may; and if he may communicate with him, it cannot be denied but that he may miniſter to him. But this was the caſe of the Sons of *Iſrael*, who did eat Manna, and drank of the Rock; and yet that Rock was *Chriſt*, and that Manna was alſo his Sacrament; and yet *with many of theſe God was angry, and they fell in the Wilderneſs*. And if Baptiſm was given as ſoon as ever men were converted, in the very day of their change, and that by the Apoſtles themſelves, and yet the ſame Chriſt is there conſigned and exhibited. We may remember, that in Scripture we find no difference in the two Sacraments, as to this particular. But in this there needs not much be ſaid; they that think things can be otherwiſe, and have tried, have declared to all the world by the event of things, that although the guides of Souls may, by wiſe and ſeaſonable diſcourſes, perſuade and prevail with *ſome few perſons*, yet no man can reform the world; and if all were rejected, whoſe life does not pleaſe the Curate, ſome will not care, and will let it quite alone; and others that do care, will never the more be mended, but turn hypocrites; and they are the worſt of men, but moſt readily communicated: Some other evils do alſo follow, and when we have reckoned Schiſms, Partialities, Reproaches, Animoſities, and Immortal hatreds between Prieſt and People, we have not reckoned the one half.

6. When to ſeparate Criminals can be prudent and uſeful, and is orderly limited, and legal, it ought not to be omitted upon any conſideration,

becauſe it is the ſinews and whole ſtrength of Eccleſiaſtical diſcipline, and is a moſt charitable miniſtry to ſouls, and brings great regard to the Holy Sacrament, and produces reverence in the Communicants, and is a deletery to ſin, and was the perpetual practice of the beſt Ages of the Church, and was bleſſed with an excellent correſponding piety in their Congregations; upon which account, and of other conſiderations, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Baſil*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, and divers others, call upon Prelates and People, to exerciſe and undergo reſpectively this Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline.

But his hath in it ſome variety. 1. For if the perſon be Notorious, a great and incorrigible Criminal, refuſing to hear, the Church proceeding againſt him upon complaint, confeſſion, or notoriety, and conſequently to be eſteemed as a Heathen and a Publican; then comes in the Apoſtolical rules, *with ſuch a one not to eat;* and, *withdraw from ſuch a one*, for there *is no accord between Chriſt and Belial*, between a Chriſtian and a Heathen, or an Unbeliever; that is, one who is thruſt into the place and condition of an Infidel; and *give not that which is holy unto dogs*. 2. But if he be within the Communion of the Church, and yet a Criminal, not delated, not convict, not legally condemned, and yet privately known to be ſuch, or publicly ſuſpected and ſcandalous; the Miniſter of Religion muſt ſeparate him by the Word of his Miniſtry, and tell him his danger, and uſe all the means he can to bring him to repentance and amends before he admits him; if the Miniſter of

Religion omits this duty, he falls under the Curſe threatened by God in the Prophet, If he *does not warn him*, if he does *not ſpeak to the wicked, to give him warning to ſave his life; his blood ſhall be upon him*. If there be a regular juriſdiction eſtabliſhed, and this ſpiritual Authority be backed with the ſecular, it muſt be uſed according to the meaſures of its eſtabliſhment, and for the good of the Church in general, and of the Sinner in particular; that is, although the perſon be not as a Heathen, and Excommunicate by the Church's ſentence, yet he muſt be rejected for a time, and thruſt into repentance, and meaſures of ſatisfaction; and as he muſt not refuſe, ſo muſt not the Miniſter of the Sacrament otherwiſe admit him; and in this ſenſe it was, that St. *Chryſoſtom* ſaid, *He would rather loſe his life, than admit unworthy men to the Lord's Table*.

7. But becauſe Piety hath ſuffered ſhipwreck, and all diſcipline hath been loſt in the ſtorm, and good manners have been thrown overboard; the beſt remedy in the world that yet remains, and is in uſe amongſt the moſt pious ſons and daughters of the Church is, that they would conduct their Repentance by the continual advices and miniſtry of a ſpiritual Guide; for by this alone, or principally, was the primitive Piety and Repentances advanced to the excellency, which we often admire, but ſeldom imitate; and the event will be, that beſides we ſhall be guided in the ways of holineſs in general, we ſhall be at peace, as to the times and manner of receiving the Holy Sacrament, our penitential abſtentions, and ſeaſonable returns: and we

ſhall not ſo frequently feel the effects of the Divine anger upon our perſons, as a reproach of our folly, and the puniſhment of our unworthy receiving the Divine Myſteries. And this was earneſtly adviſed and preſſed upon their people by the holy Fathers, who had as great experience in their conduct, as they had zeal for the good of ſouls. *Let no man ſay, I repent in private, I repent before God in ſecret. God, who alone does pardon, does know that I am contrite in heart. For was it in vain? was it ſaid to no purpoſe, Whatſoever ye ſhall looſe in earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven? We evacuate the Goſpel of God, we fruſtrate the words of Chriſt.* So St. *Auſtin. And therefore when a man hath ſpoken the ſentence of the moſt ſevere medicine, let him come to the Preſidents of the Church, who are to miniſter in the power of the Keys of him; and beginning now to be a good Son, keeping the order of his Mother, let him receive the meaſure and manner of his repentance from the Preſidents of the Sacraments.* Concerning this thing, I ſhall never think it fit to diſpute, for there is nothing to enforce it, but enough to perſuade it; but he that tries, will find the benefit of it himſelf, and will be beſt able to tell it to all the world.

SECTION VII. —*Penitential Soliloquies, Ejaculations, Exercises, and preparatory Prayers to be used in all the days of Preparation to the Holy Sacrament.*

I.

*ALMIGHTY and Eternal God, the Fountain of all virtue, the Support of all holy hopes, the Author of pardon, of life and of salvation; Thou art the Comforter of all that call upon thee: Thou hast concluded all under sin, that thou mightest have mercy upon all: Look upon me, O God, and have pity on me, lying in my blood and misery, in my shame, and in my sins, in the fear and guilt of thy wrath, in the shadow of death, and in the gates of Hell. I confess to thee, O God, what thou knowest already; but I confess it to manifest thy Justice, and to glorify thy Mercy, who hast spared me so long; that I am guilty of the vilest and basest follies, which usually dishonour the fools, and the worst of the sons of men.*

II.

*I have been proud and covetous, envious and lustful, angry and greedy, indevout and irreligious; restless in my passions, sensual and secular, but hating wise counsels, and soon weary of the Offices of a holy Religion. I cannot give an account of my time, and I cannot reckon the sins of my tongue. My crimes are intolerable, and my imperfection shameful, and my omissions innumerable; and what shall I do, O thou*

*Preſerver of men? I am ſo vile, that I cannot expreſs it; ſo ſinful, that I am hateful to myſelf, and much more abominable muſt I needs be in thy eyes. I have ſinned againſt thee without neceſſity, ſometimes without temptation, only becauſe I would ſin, and would not delight in the ways of peace: I have been ſo ungrateful, ſo fooliſh, ſo unreaſonable, that I have put my own eyes out, that I might with confidence, and without fear, ſin againſt ſo good a God, ſo gracious a Father, ſo infinite a Power, ſo glorious a Majeſty, ſo bountiful a Patron, and ſo mighty a Redeemer, that my ſin is grown ſhameful, and aggravated even to amazement. I can ſay no more, I am aſhamed, O God, I am amazed, I am confounded in thy preſence.*

III.

*But yet, O God, thou art the healer of our breaches, and the lifter up of our head, and I muſt not deſpair; and I am ſure thy goodneſs is infinite, and thou doſt not delight in the death of a Sinner; and my ſins, though very great, are infinitely leſs than thy mercies, which thou haſt revealed to all penitent and returning Sinners in Jeſus Chriſt. I am not worthy to look up to Heaven; but be thou pleaſed to look down into the duſt, and lift up a Sinner from the Dunghill; let me not periſh in my folly, or be conſumed in thy heavy diſpleaſure. Give me time and ſpace to repent, and give me powers of Grace, and aids of thy Spirit; that as by thy gift and mercy I intend to amend whatſoever is amiſs, ſo I may indeed have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the ſame. Inſpire me with the*

*Spirit of repentance and mortification, that I may always fight againſt my ſins, till I be more than conqueror. Support me with a holy hope; confirm me with an excellent operative, and unreprovable faith, and enkindle a bright and a burning charity in my Soul: Give me patience in ſuffering, ſeverity in judging and condemning my ſin, and in puniſhing the Sinner; that judging myſelf, I may not be condemned by thee; that mourning for my ſins, I may rejoice in thy Pardon; that killing my ſin, I may live in righteouſneſs; that denying my own will, I may always perform thine; and by the methods of thy Spirit, I may overcome all carnal and ſpiritual wickedneſſes, and walk in thy light, and delight in thy ſervice, and perfect my obedience, and be wholly delivered from my ſin, and for ever preſerved from thy wrath, and at laſt paſs on from a certain expectation, to an actual fruition of the Glories of thy Kingdom, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Amen, Amen, Amen.

1. *I am in thy ſight, O Lord, a polluted perſon; ſin, like a cruſt of Leproſy, hath overſpread me: I am a ſcandal to others, a ſhame to myſelf, a reproach to my Relations, a burthen to the earth, a ſpot in the Church, and deſerve to be rejected and ſcorned by thee.*

2. *But this, O God, I cannot bear; It is juſt in thee to deſtroy me; but thou delighteſt not in that: I am guilty of death, but thou loveſt rather that I ſhould live.*

3. *O let the cry of thy Son's blood, who offers an eter-*

*nal Sacrifice to thee, ſpeak on my behalf, and ſpeak better things than the blood of* Abel.

4. *My Conſcience does accuſe me, the Devils rejoice in my fall, and aggravate my Crimes, already too great; and thy Holy Spirit is grieved by me: But my Saviour Jeſus died for me, and thou pitieſt me, and thy Holy Spirit ſtill calls upon me, and I am willing to come; but I cannot come, unleſs thou draweſt me with the cords of Love.*

5. *O draw me unto thee by the Arguments of Charity, by the endearments of thy mercies, by the order of thy providence, by the hope of thy promiſes, by the ſenſe of thy comforts, by the conviction of my underſtanding, by the zeal and paſſion of holy affections, by an unreprovable faith, and an humble hope, by a religious fear, and an increaſing love, by the obedience of precepts, and efficacy of holy example, by thy Power and thy Wiſdom, by the love of thy Son, and the grace of thy Spirit. Draw me, O God, and I will run after thee, and the ſweetneſſes of thy precious Ointments.*

6. *I am not worthy, O Lord, I am not worthy to come into thy preſence, much leſs to eat the fleſh of the ſacrificed Lamb: For my ſins, O bleſſed Saviour Jeſus, went along in confederation with the High Prieſts, in treachery with* Judas, *in injuſtice with* Pilate, *in malice with the People.*

7. *My ſins and the Jews crucified thee; my hypocriſy was the kiſs that betrayed thee; my covetous and ambitious deſires were the thorns that pricked*

*thy ſacred head; my vanity was the knee that mocked thee; my luſts diſrobed thee, and made thee naked to ſhame and cruel ſcourgings; my anger and malice, my peeviſhneſs and revenge, were the bitter gall which thou didſt taſte; my bitter words and curſed ſpeaking, were the vinegar which thou didſt drink; and my ſcarlet ſins made for thee a purple robe of mockery and deriſion: And where ſhall I, vile Wretch, appear, who have put my Lord to death, and expoſed him to an open ſhame, and crucified the Lord of life?*

8. *Where ſhould I appear, but before my Saviour, who died for them that have murdered him, who hath loved them that hated him, who is the Saviour of his enemies, and the life of the dead, and the redemption of Captives, and the Advocate for Sinners, and all that we do need, and all that we can deſire?*

9. *Grant that in thy wounds I may find my ſafety, in thy ſtripes my cure, in thy pain my peace, in thy croſs my victory, in thy reſurrection my triumph, and a Crown of righteouſneſs in the glories of thy eternal Kingdom.* Amen. Amen.

## St. *Auſtin's* penitential Prayer.

" *Before thy eyes, O gracious Lord, we bring our*
" *crimes; before thee we expoſe the wounds of our*
" *bleeding Souls. That which we ſuffer is but little;*
" *but that which we deſerve is intolerable: We fear*
" *the puniſhment of our ſins, but ceaſe not pertina-*

" *ciouſly to proceed in ſinning: Our weakneſs is ſome-*
" *times ſmitten with thy rod, but our iniquity is not*
" *changed; our grieved mind is troubled, but our ſtiff*
" *neck is not bended with the flexures of a holy obe-*
" *dience; our life ſpends in vanity and trouble, but*
" *amends itſelf in nothing: When thou ſmiteſt us,*
" *then we confeſs our ſin; but when thy viſitation is*
" *paſt, then we forget that we have wept: When thou*
" *ſtretcheſt forth thy hand, then we promiſe to do our*
" *duty; but when thou takeſt off thy hand, we per-*
" *form no promiſes: If thou ſtrikeſt, we cry to thee*
" *to ſpare us; but when thou ſpareſt, we again pro-*
" *voke thee to ſtrike us.*

" *Thus, O God, the guilty confeſs before thee; and*
" *unleſs thou giveſt us pardon, it is but juſt that we*
" *periſh: But, O Almighty God our Father, grant*
" *to us what we aſk, even though we deſerve it not;*
" *for thou madeſt us out of nothing, elſe we had not*
" *any power to aſk. Pardon us, O gracious Father,*
" *and take away all our ſin, and deſtroy the work of*
" *the Devil; and let the enemy have no part or por-*
" *tion in us; but acknowledge the work of thy own*
" *hand, the price of thine own blood, the ſheep of thy*
" *own fold, the members of thy own body, the purchaſe*
" *of thine own inheritance; and make us to be what*
" *thou haſt commanded; give unto us what thou haſt*
" *deſigned for us; enable us for the work thou haſt*
" *enjoined us, and bring us to the place which thou*
" *haſt prepared for us by the blood of the everlaſting*
" *Covenant, and by the pains of the Croſs, and the*
" *glories of thy Reſurrection, O bleſſed and moſt glo-*
" *rious Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus.* Amen.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *Of our Actual and Ornamental Preparation to the Reception of the Bleſſed Sacrament.*

#### Section I.

HE that is dreſſed by the former meaſures, is always worthy to communicate; but he that is always well veſted, will againſt a wedding-day be more adorned; and the five wiſe Virgins that ſtood ready for the coming of the Bridegroom, with oil in their Lamps, and fire on their oil, yet at the notice of his coming trimmed their Lamps, and made them to burn brighter. The receiving of the Bleſſed Sacrament is a receiving of Chriſt; and here the Soul is united to our Lord; and this Feaſt is the Supper of the Lamb, and the Lamb is the Bridegroom, and every faithful Soul is the Bride; and all this is but the image of the ſtate of bleſſedneſs in Heaven, where we ſhall ſee him without a veil, whom here we receive under the veil of Sacraments; and there we ſhall live upon him without a figure, to whom we are now brought by ſignifications and repreſentments corporal. But then as we here receive the ſame thing as there, though

after a leſs perfect manner; it is alſo very fit, we ſhould have here the ſame, that is, a Heavenly converſation, though after the manner of men, living upon the earth. It is true, that bleſſed ſouls receive Chriſt always, and they live accordingly, in perpetual uninterrupted glorifications of his name, and conformities to his excellencies. Here we receive him at certain times, and at ſuch times we ſhould make our converſation celeſtial, and our holineſs actual, when our addreſſes are ſo, ſo that in our actual addreſſes to the reception of theſe Divine Myſteries, there is nothing elſe to be done, but that, what in our whole life is done habitually, at that time be done actually. No man is fit to die, but he who is ſafe if he dies ſuddenly; and yet he that is ſo fitted, if he hears the noiſe of the Bridegroom's coming, will ſnuff his lamp, and ſtir up the fire, and apply the oil; and ſo muſt he that hath warning of his Communion.

He that communicates every day, muſt live a life of a continual Religion; and ſo muſt he who in any ſenſe communicates frequently, if he does it at all worthily; but he that lives careleſſly, and dreſſes his ſoul with the beginnings of virtues againſt a Communion-day, is like him that repents not till the day of his death, if it ſucceeds well, it is happy for him; but if it does not, he may blame himſelf for being confident without a promiſe. Every worthy Communicant, muſt prepare himſelf by a holy life, by mortification of all his ſins, by the acquiſition of all Chriſtian graces; and this is not the work of a day, or a week; but by how

much the more theſe things are done, by ſo much the better we are prepared.

So that the actual addreſs and proper preparation to the Bleſſed Sacrament, is indeed an enquiry whether we are habitually prepared; that is, whether we be in a ſtate of grace; whether we belong to Chriſt, whether we have faith and Charity, whether we have repented truly. If we be to communicate next week, or it may be to-morrow, theſe things cannot be gotten to-day, and therefore we muſt ſtay till we be ready. And if by our want of preparation, we be compelled for the ſaving of our ſouls, and leſt we die, to abſtain from this holy Feaſt, let us conſider what our caſe would be, if this ſhould be the laſt coming of the Bridegroom. This is but the warning of that; this is but his laſt coming a little antedated; and God graciouſly calls us now to be prepared here, that we may not be unprepared then; but it is a formidable thing to be thruſt out when we ſee others enter.

And therefore, when the Maſters of ſpiritual life call upon us to ſet apart a day, or two, or three, for preparation to this holy Feaſt, they do not mean that any man, who on the *Thurſday* is unfit and unworthy, ſhould be fitted to communicate on *Sunday:* but that he ſhould on thoſe days try whether he be or no, and paſs from one degree of perfection to a greater, from the leſs perfect to the more; for let us think of it as we pleaſe, there is no other preparation; and it might otherwiſe ſeem a wonder to us, why St. *Paul*, who particularly ſpeaks of it, and indeed the whole New Teſtament,

ſhould ſay nothing of any particular preparation to this holy Feaſt; but only gives us caution that we do not receive it unworthily, but gives us no particular rule or precept but this one, *That a man ſhould examine himſelf*, and ſo let him eat: I ſay, this might ſeem very ſtrange, but that we find there is, and there can be no worthy preparation to it, but a life of holineſs, and *that every one who names the Lord Jeſus ſhall depart from iniquity;* and therefore, that againſt the day of Communion there is nothing peculiarly and ſignally required, but to examine ourſelves, to ſee if all be right in the whole, and what is wanting towards our proportion of perfection and ornament to ſupply it. So that the *immediate preparation* to the holy Communion can have in it but three parts and conjugations of duty.

1. An examination of our conſcience.

2. An actual ſupply of ſuch actions as are wanting.

3. Actual devotion, and the exerciſe of ſpecial graces by way of Prayer, ſo to adorn our preſent ſtate and diſpoſitions.

## Section II.—*Rules for Examination of our Conſciences againſt the day of our Communion.*

HOW we are to examine ourſelves concerning ſuch ſtates of life and conjugations of duty, as are properly relative to the great and eſſential preparation and worthineſs

to communicate, I have already largely conſidered: Now I ſhall add ſuch practical advices, which may with advantage miniſter to the actual reception, ſuch which concern the immediate preparatory and ornamental addreſs; that we may reduce the former Doctrine to action and exerciſe againſt that time, and this will ſerve as an Appendix, and for the completing the former meaſures.

1. In the days of your addreſs, conſider the greatneſs of the work you go about, that it is the higheſt Myſtery of the whole Religion you handle; that it is no leſs than Chriſt himſelf in Sacrament that you take; that as ſure as any Chriſtian does ever receive the Spirit of God, ſo ſure every good man receives Chriſt in the Sacrament; that to receive Chriſt in Sacrament, is not a diminution or leſſening of the bleſſing, it is a real communion with him, to all material events of bleſſing and holineſs, that now every Communicant does an act that will contribute very much to an happy or an unhappy eternity; that by this act and its appendages a man may live or die for ever; that a man cannot at all be ſuppoſed in any ſtate, that this thing will be indifferent to him in that ſtate, but will ſet him forward to ſome very great event; that this is the greateſt thing that God gives us in this world, and if we do it well, it is the greateſt thing we can do in the world; and therefore when we have conſidered theſe things in general, let us examine whether we be perſons in any ſenſe fitted to ſuch glorious Communications, and prepared by ſuch diſpoſitions, which the greatneſs of

the Myſtery may in its appearance ſeem to require. Some may perceive their diſproportion at the firſt ſight, and need to examine no farther. It is, as if a Jew in *Rome* with his baſket and bottle of hay, ſhould be adviſed to ſtand Candidate for the Conſulſhip; you mock him if you ſpeak of it: and therefore if you find your caſe like this, ſtart back and come not near. It is τὸ θεῖον, there's Divinity in it; and to the wicked it brings *brimſtone* and *fire*.

2. Next to this general conſideration, examine yourſelf concerning thoſe things, in which you are or may be offenſive to others; For although every man is to begin at home, yet that which is firſt to be changed, is that which is not only evil in itſelf, but afflictive to others; that which is ſin and ſhame, that which offends God and my Neighbour too; that is, it is criminal, and it is ſcandalous. Examine therefore thyſelf about injuriouſneſs, robbery, detraction, obloquy, ſcolding, much prating, peeviſh converſation, ungentle nature, aptneſs to quarrel, and the like. For thus if like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, we walk unblameably, and unreprovable before all the World; certain it is, the Church will not reject us from the Communion; and we have purchaſed a good degree in the Faith, and ſhall think our condition worth preſerving and worth improving.

3. Examine thyſelf concerning all intercourſes in the matter of men, whether any unhandſome contract was made, any fraudulent bargain, any ſurpriſe or out-writing of the weaker, thy confident, or unwary Brother; and whatever you do,

place that right: For money is a ſnare, and in contracts we are of all things ſooneſt deceived, and are very often wrong, and yet never think ſo, and we do everything before we part with this. But when everything is ſet right here, we may better hope of other things; for either they are right, or will with leſs difficulty be made ſo.

4. Like to this, for the matter of the enquiry, is that we examine ourſelves in the matter of our debts, whether we detain them otherwiſe than in juſtice we are obliged? Here we muſt examine, whether we be able to pay them? If ſo, whether preſently or afterwards? by what we are diſabled? whether we can or ought to alter the ſtate of our expenſes? what probability we have to pay them at all? how we can ſecure that they ſhall be paid? and if they cannot, how much can we do towards it? and what amends can we make to our Creditors? And how we mean to end that intercourſe? for this ought to be ſo far at leaſt ſtated, that we may be ſure we do no injuſtice, and do no injury that we can avoid. This is a material conſideration, and of great effect unto the peace of conſcience, and of a worthy diſpoſition to the holy Communion.

5. Let us examine ourſelves how we ſpend our time. Is it employed in an honeſt calling, in worthy ſtudies, in uſeful buſineſs, in affairs of government, in ſomething that is charitable, in anything that is uſeful? But if we throw away great portions of it, of which we can give no ſober account: although the Laws chaſtiſe us not, and

appoint no guardians to conduct our eſtates, as it does to fools and mad men; yet we are like to fall into ſeverer hands; and God will be angry. But they are very unfit to entertain Chriſt, who when they have received his Sacrament, reſolve to dwell in idleneſs and fooliſh Divertiſements, and have no buſineſs but Recreation. At the beſt, it is but a ſuſpicious ſtate of life; that can give no wiſe account to God and the Commonwealth.

6. Examine thyſelf in the particulars of thy relation; eſpecially where thou governeſt and takeſt accounts of others, and exacteſt their faults, and are not ſo obnoxious to them as they to thee. Princes, and Generals, and Parents, and Huſbands, and Maſters think more things are lawful to them towards their inferiors, than indeed there are, and as they may eaſily tranſgreſs in diſcipline and reproof, ſo they very often fail in making proviſions for the ſouls and bodies of their inferiors, and proceed with more confidence, and to greater progreſſions in evil, becauſe they paſs without animadverſion, or the notice of Laws. Theſe Perſons are not often reſponſible to their ſubordinates, but always for them; and therefore it were good that we took great notice of it ourſelves, becauſe few elſe do.

7. Let us examine ourſelves concerning the great and little accidents of our private intercourſe and converſation in our family; eſpecially between man and wife in the little quarrellings and accidental unkindneſſes wherein both think themſelves innocent, and it may be both are to blame. If the

matter be diſputable, then do thou diſpute it with thyſelf, or rather condemn thyſelf; for if it be fit to be queſtioned, it is certainly in ſome meaſure fit to be repented of. For either in the thing itſelf, or in the miſapprehenſion of the thing, or in the not expounding it well, or in the not ſuffering it, or in the not concealing it, or in the not turning it into virtue, or in the not forgiving it, or not conducting it prudently, it is great odds but thou art to blame. Theſe little *rencontres* between man and wife, are great hindrances to *prayer*, as St. *Peter* intimates; and by conſequence do infinitely indiſpoſe us to the *greateſt ſolemnity of prayer*, the holy Sacrament; and therefore ought to be ſtrictly ſurveyed, and the Principles reſcinded, and the beginnings ſtopped, or elſe we ſhall communicate without fruit.

8. Be ſure againſt a day of Communion to examine thyſelf in thoſe things which no Law condemns, but yet are of ill report, ſuch as are ſumptuous and expenſive clothing, great feaſts, gaudy dreſſings, going often to taverns, fantaſtic following of faſhions, inordinate merriments, living beyond our means; in theſe and the like, we muſt take our meaſures by a proportion to the prudence and ſeverity of Chriſtian Religion, and by obſervation of the cuſtoms and uſages of the beſt and wiſeſt perſons in every condition of men and women. For that we do *things* which are of good *report* is a precept of the Apoſtle; and as by little illneſs in the body, ſo by the ſmalleſt indiſpoſitions in the ſoul, if they be proceeded in, we may finiſh the

method of an eternal death. And theſe things, although when they are argued, may in many particulars by witty men be repreſented in themſelves as innocent, yet they proceed from an evil and unſafe principle, and not from a ſpirit fitted to dwell with Chriſt, and live upon Sacraments and ſecret participations.

9. Let us with curioſity examine our ſouls in ſuch actions, which are condemned by the Laws of God and Man reſpectively, but are not defined, and the guilty perſon cannot in many caſes be argued and convinced; ſuch as are pride and covetouſneſs. For when external actions can proceed from many principles, as a haughty gait from pride, or an ill habit of body, or imitation, or careleſſneſs, or humour; it will be hard for any man to ſay, I am proud becauſe I lift up my feet too high; and who can ſay that a degree of care and thriftineſs in my caſe and in my circumſtances is covetouſneſs? Here as we muſt be gentle to others, ſo we muſt be ſevere to ourſelves, and not only condemn the very firſt entries of an infant-ſin, but ſuſpect his approaches, and acknowledge a fault before it be certain and evident.

In theſe things we muſt the rather examine ourſelves; becauſe we can be the more certain accuſers of ourſelves: and the enquiries are of great concernment, becauſe they are that curioſity of piety and ſecurity of condition which becomes perſons of growth in grace, and ſuch as are properly fitted to the Communion; and indeed they are of all things moſt commonly neglected; men

uſually live at that rate, that if they be not ſcandalous, they ſuppoſe themſelves to be Saints, and fitted for the neareſt intercourſe with Chriſt.

Theſe inſtances of *examination* do ſuppoſe, that we have already examined ourſelves concerning all habits of ſin, and laid aſide every diſcernible weight, and repented of every obſerved criminal action; and broken every cuſtom of leſſer irregularities, and are reformed by the meaſures of Laws and expreſs Commandments, and are changed from death to life; and that we are perſons ſo far advanced, that we need not to regard what is behind, but to preſs forwards towards the ſtate of a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus. For he that is in that ſtate of things, that he is to examine how many actions of uncleanneſs or intemperance, or ſlander he hath committed ſince the laſt Communion, is not fit to come to another, but muſt change his life, and repent greatly before he comes hither.

## Section III.—*Of an actual ſupply to be made of ſuch actions and degrees of good as are wanting; againſt a Communion-day.*

1.

IF on a Communion-day, we need very much examination, we can make but little ſupply of thoſe many defects, which it is likely a diligent enquiry will diſcover; and therefore it is highly adviſable, that as we ought

to repent every day, and not put it all off till the day of our Communion or our Death; ſo we ſhould every day examine ourſelves, at the ſhutting in of the day, or at our going to bed; for ſo St. *Baſil*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, St. *Anthony*, and St. *Auſtin*, St. *Ephrem*, and St. *Dorotheus* do adviſe. Others adviſe that it be done twice every day: and indeed the oftener we recollect ourſelves: 1. The more weakneſſes we ſhall obſerve, and 2. the more faults correct, and 3. watch the better, and 4. repent the more perfectly, and 5. offend leſs, and 6. be more prepared for death, and 7. be more humble, and 8. with eaſe prevent the contracting of evil habits, and 9. interrupt the union of little ſins into a chain of death, and 10. more readily prevail upon our paſſions, and 11. better underſtand ourſelves, and 12. more frequently converſe with God, and 13. oftener pray, and 14. have a more heavenly converſation; and in fine, 15. be more fitted for a frequent and a holy Communion.

2. The end of examination is, 1. That we grieve for all our ſins. 2. That we reſolve to amend all. 3. That we actually watch and pray againſt all. Therefore it is neceſſary that when we have examined againſt a Communion-day; 1. We always do actions of contrition for every thing we have obſerved to be amiſs; 2. That we renew our reſolutions of better obedience; 3. And that we pray for particular ſtrength againſt our failings.

3. He that would communicate with fruit, muſt ſo have ordered his examinations, that he muſt not always be in the ſame method. He muſt not al-

ways be walking with a candle in his hands, and prying into corners; but they must be swept and garnished, and be kept clean and adorned. His examinations must be made full and throughly, and be productive of inferior resolutions, and must pass on to rules and exercises of caution. That is, 1. We must consider where we fail oftenest. 2. From what principle this default comes. 3. What are the best remedies. 4. We must pass on to the real and vigorous use of them, and when the case is thus stated, and drawn into rules and resolutions of acting them; we are only to take care we do so, and every day examine whether we have or no. But we must not at all dwell in this relative and preparatory and ministering duty. But if we find that we have reason to do so; let us be sure that something is amiss; we have played the hypocrites, and done the work of the Lord negligently or falsely.

4. If any passion be the daily exercise or temptation of our life, let us be careful to put the greatest stress upon that, and therefore against a Communion-day, do something in defiance and diminution of that; chastise it, if it hath prevailed; reinforce thy resolutions against it; examine all thy aids, see what hath been prosperous, and pursue that point, and if thou hast not at all prevailed, then know, all is not well; for he communicates without fruit, who makes no progressions in his mortifications and conquest over his passions. It may be, we shall be long exercised with the remains of the Canaanites; for it is in the matter of

Paſſions as *Seneca* ſaid of Vices, *We fight againſt them, not to conquer them entirely, but that they may not conquer us;* not to kill them, but to bring them under command; and unleſs we do that, we cannot be ſure that we are in the ſtate of grace, and therefore cannot tell if we do, or do not worthily communicate. For by all the exterior actions of our life, we cannot ſo well tell how it is with us, as by the obſervation of our affections and paſſions, our wills and our deſires. *For I can command my foot, and it muſt obey; and my hand, and it cannot reſiſt; but when I bid my appetite obey, or my anger be ſtill, or my will not to deſire, I find it very often to rebel againſt my word, and againſt God's word.* Therefore let us be ſure to take ſome effective courſe with the appetite, and place our Guards upon the inward man; and upon our preparation days do ſome violence to our luſts and ſecret deſires, by holy reſolutions, and ſevere purpoſes, and rules of caution, and by deſigning a courſe of ſpiritual arts and exerciſes, for the reducing them to reaſon and obedience: ſomething that may be remembered, and ſomething that will be done. But to this, let this caution be added; that of all things in the World, we be careful of relapſes into our old follies or infirmities; for if things do not ſucceed well afterwards, they were not well ordered at firſt.

5. Upon our Communion days, and days of preparation, let us endeavour to ſtir up every grace, which we are to exerciſe in our converſation; and thruſt ourſelves forward in zeal of thoſe graces; that we begin to amend our lukewarmneſs, and

repair our ſins of omiſſion. For this is a day of ſacrifice; and every ſacrifice muſt be conſumed by fire, and therefore, now is the day of improvement, and the proper ſeaſon for the zeal of duty; and if upon the ſolemn day of the ſoul, we do not take care of omiſſions, and repair the great and little forgetfulneſſes, and omiſſions of duty, and paſs from the infirmities of a Man, to the affections of a Saint, we may all our lifetime abide in a ſtate of lukewarmneſs, diſimprovement and indifference; to this purpoſe,

6. Compare day with day, week with week, Communion with Communion, time with time, duty with duty, and ſee if you can obſerve any advantage, any ground gotten of a paſſion; any further degree of the ſpirit of mortification, any new permanent fires of devotion; for by volatile, ſudden, and tranſient flames, we can never gueſs ſteadily: but be ſure never to think you are at all improved, unleſs you obſerve your defects to be, 1. fewer: 2. or lighter: or 3. at leaſt not to be the ſame, but of another kind and inſtance, againſt which you had not made particular proviſions formerly; but now upon this new obſervation and experience you muſt,

7. Upon or againſt a Communion-day, endeavour to put your ſoul into that order and ſtate of good things, as if that day you were to die; and conſider, that unleſs you dare die upon that day, if God ſhould call you, there is but little reaſon you ſhould dare to receive the Sacrament of life, or the miniſtry of death. He that communicates

worthily, is juſtified from ſins; and to him death can have no ſting, to whom the Sacrament brings life and health; and therefore let every one that is to communicate, place himſelf by meditation in the gates of death, and ſuppoſe himſelf ſeated before the Tribunal of God's judgment, and ſee whether he can reaſonably hope, that his ſins are pardoned, and cured, and extinguiſhed. And then if you judge righteous judgment, you will ſoon find what pinches moſt, what makes you moſt afraid, what was moſt criminal, or what is leaſt mortified; and ſo you will learn to make proviſions accordingly.

8. If you find anything yet amiſs, or too ſuſpicious, or remaining to evil purpoſes, the relics of the ſcattered enemy after a war, reſolve to uſe ſome general inſtrument of piety or repentance, that may, by being uſeful in all the parts of your life and converſation, meet with every ſtraggling irregularity, and by perpetuity and aſſiduous force, clear the coaſt. 1. Reſolve to have the preſence of God frequently in your thoughts. 2. Or endeavour and reſolve to bring it to paſs, to have ſo great a dread and reverence of God, that you may be more aſhamed, and really troubled and confounded to ſin in the preſence of God, than in the ſight and obſervation of the beſt and ſevereſt man. 3. Or elſe reſolve to puniſh thyſelf with ſome proportionable affliction of the body or ſpirit for every irregularity or return of indecency in that inſtance, in which thou ſetteſt thyſelf to mortify any one eſpecial paſſion or temptation. Or 4. Firmly to

purpoſe in everything which is not well, not to ſtay a minute, but to repent inſtantly of it, ſeverely to condemn it, and to do ſomething at the firſt opportunity for amends: Or 5. To reſolve againſt an inſtance of infirmity for ſome ſhort, ſure, and conquerable periods of time; as if you be given to be prating, reſolve to be ſilent, or to ſpeak nothing but what is pertinent for a day; or for a day not to be angry; and then ſometimes for two days; and ſo diet your weak ſoul with little portions of food, till it be able to take in and digeſt a full meal: Or 6. Meditate often every day of death, or the day of judgment. By theſe and the like inſtruments, it will happen to the remains of ſin as it did to the Egyptians; what is left by the Hail, the Caterpillar will deſtroy; and what the Caterpillar leaves, the Locuſts will eat. Theſe inſtruments will eat the remains of ſin, as the poor gather up the gleanings after the Carts in harveſt.

9. But if at any Communion, and in the uſe of theſe advices, you do not perceive any ſenſible progreſſion in the ſpirit of mortification or devotion, then be ſure to be aſhamed, and to be humbled for thy indiſpoſition and ſlow progreſſion in the diſcipline of Chriſt: and if thou art humbled truly for thy want of improvement, it is certain thou haſt improved. And if you come with fear and trembling, it is very probable, you will come in the ſpirit of repentance and devotion.

Theſe exerciſes and meaſures will not ſeem many, long, and tedious, as the rules of art; if we conſider that all are not to be uſed at all times, nor

by every perſon; but are inſtruments fitted to ſeveral neceſſities, and uſeful when they can do good, and to be uſed no longer. For he that uſes theſe, or any the like advices by way of ſolemnity, and periodical returns, will ſtill think fit to uſe them at every Communion, as long as he lives; but he that uſes them as he ſhould, that is, to effect the work of reformation upon his Soul, may lay them all aſide, according as his work is done. But if we would every day do ſomething of this; if we would every day prepare for the day of Death, or which is of a like conſideration, for the day of our Communion; if we would every night examine our paſſed day, and ſet our things in order; if we would have a perpetual intercourſe and converſation with God; or, which is better than all examinations in the World, if we ſhould actually attend to what we do, and conſider every action, and ſpeak ſo little, that we might conſider it; we ſhould find, that upon the day of our Communion, we ſhould have nothing to do, but the third particular, that is, *The Offices of Prayer and Euchariſt*, and to renew our graces by prayer and exerciſes of devotion.

## Section IV.—*Devotions to be uſed upon the Morning of Communion.*

*BLESSED Lord, our gracious Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; thou art fairer than the children of men; upon thee the Angels look, and be-*

*hold and wonder; what am I, O Lord, that thou who fillest Heaven and Earth, shouldest descend and desire to dwell with me, who am nothing but folly and infirmity, misery and sin, shame and death?*

2. *I confess, O God, that when I consider thy greatness, and my nothingness, thy purity and my uncleanness, thy glory and my shame; I see it to be infinitely unreasonable and presumptuous that I should approach to thy sacred presence, and desire to partake of thy Sacraments, and to enter into thy grace, and to hope for a part of thy glory. But when I consider thy mercy and thy wisdom, thy bounty and thy goodness, thy readiness to forgive, and thy desires to impart thyself unto thy Servants, then I am lifted up with hope; then I come with boldness to the throne of grace. Even so, O Lord, because thou hast commanded it, and because thou lovest it should be so.*

3. *It was never heard, O Lord, from the beginning of the world, that thou didst ever despise him that called upon thee, or forsake any man that abides in thy fear, or that any person who trusted in the Lord, was ever confounded. But if I come to thee, I bring an unworthy person to be united unto thee; If I come not, I shall remain unworthy for ever; if I stay away, I fear to lose thee; If I come, I fear to offend thee, and that will lose thee more, and myself too at last. I know, O God, I know, my sins have separated between me and my God; but thy love and thy passion, thy holiness and thy obedience hath reconciled us: and though my sins deter me, yet they make it necessary*

*for me to come; and though thy greatneſs amazes me, yet it is ſo full of goodneſs, that it invites me.*

4. *O therefore, bleſſed Saviour, who didſt, for our ſakes, take upon thee our paſſions and ſenſibilities, our weakneſſes and our ſufferings, who wert hungry after the temptation of the Devil, weary and thirſty in thy diſcourſe with the woman of* Samaria, *who didſt weep over* Lazarus, *wert afflicted in the Garden, whipt in the Conſiſtory, nailed on the Croſs, pierced with a Spear, wrapped in linen, laid in the grave, and ſo art become a merciful High-Prieſt, and pitiful to our infirmities; be pleaſed to receive a weary ſinner, an over-burdened conſcience, an afflicted, polluted ſoul into thy care and conduct, into thy cuſtody and cure. I know that a thouſand years of tears and ſorrow, the purity of Angels, the love of Saints, and the humiliation of the greateſt penitent, is not ſufficient to make me worthy to dwell with thee, to be united to thy infinity, to be fed with thy body, and refreſhed with thy pureſt blood, to become bone of thy bone, and fleſh of thy fleſh, and ſpirit of thy ſpirit.*

5. *But what I cannot be of myſelf, let me be made by thee; I come to thee, wounded, and bruiſed, and bleeding; for thou art my Phyſician: ariſe then with healing in thy wings; I am thirſty and faint; as the Hart longeth after the water brooks, ſo longeth my Soul after thee, O God; thou art the eternal Fountain, from whence ſpring the waters of comfort and ſalvation; I am hungry, and empty, and weak, and I come running after thee, becauſe thou haſt the words*

*of eternal life; O send me not away empty, for I shall faint and die; I cannot live without thee. O let virtue go forth from thee and heal all my sickness; do thou appear to my Soul in these Mysteries; heal my sores, purify my stains, enlighten my darkness, turn me from all vain imaginations and illusions of the Enemy, all perverseness of will, all violence and inordination of passions, sensual desires and deviliſh angers, lust and malice, gluttony and pride, the spirit of envy, and the spirit of detraction; let not sin reign in my members, nor the Devil lead my will captive, nor the World abuse my understanding, and debauch my conversation.*

6. *O Jesus, be a Jesus unto me: and let this Sacrament be a savour of life, and thy holy body the bread of life, and thy precious blood the purifier of my sinful life. Grant I may receive these Divine Mysteries for the amendment of my life, and the defensative against my sins; for the increase of virtue, and the perfection of my spirit; Grant that I may from thee, thus sacramentally communicated, derive prevailing grace for the amendment of my life; spiritual wisdom, for the discerning the ways of peace; the spirit of love, and the spirit of purity, that in all my life I may walk worthy of thy gracious favours which thou giveſt to me unworthy; that I may do all my works in holiness and right intention, that I may resist every temptation, with a never fainting courage, and a caution never surprised, and a prudence never deceived.*

7. *Sweeteſt Saviour, I come to thee upon thy invitation, and by thy commandment; I could not come*

*to thee but by thee; O let me never go from thee any more, but enter into my heart; feed me with thy word, ſuſtain me with thy Spirit, refreſh me with thy comforts, and let me in this Divine Myſtery receive thee my deareſt Saviour; and be thou my wiſdom and my righteouſneſs, my ſanctification and redemption; let me receive this holy nutriment, as the earneſt of an eternal inheritance, as a defenſative againſt all ſpiritual danger, for the eviction of all the powers of the enemy: as an incentive of holy love, and a ſtrengthening of my faith, for the increaſing of a holy hope, and the conſummation of a Heavenly love; that thou being one with me, and I with thee, I may by thee be gracious in the eyes of thy heavenly Father, and may receive my portion among the inheritance of Sons, O eternal and moſt gracious Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus.* Amen, Amen.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Of our Comportment in and after our Receiving the Bleſſed Sacrament.*

### SECTION I.—*Of the Circumſtances and manner of Reception of the Divine Myſteries.*

IT is the cuſtom of the Church of great antiquity, and proportionable regard, that every Chriſtian that is in health, ſhould receive the Bleſſed Sacrament faſting. The Apoſtles and Primitive Biſhops at firſt gave it after Supper, or together with it; but that ſoon paſſed into inconvenience; and ſome were drunken, and ſome were empty and deſpiſed, and the Holy Sacrament was diſhonoured, and the Lord's Body was not diſcerned, and God was provoked to anger, and the ſinners were ſmitten and died in their ſin: as appears in the ſad Narrative which St. *Paul* makes of the miſdemeanours, and the misfortunes in the *Corinthian* Churches. Something like to which, is that which *Socrates* tells of Chriſtians in *Egypt*; they celebrated the Holy Communion at evening, but never *till they had filled themſelves with varieties of choice meat*. Of ſome alſo in *Africa* that communicated at Evening, St.

*Auſtin* ſpeaks, and of others who communicated both morning and evening; At evening, becauſe St. *Paul* called it δεῖπνον κυριακὸν, *the Lord's Supper;* and in the morning, from the univerſal cuſtom of the Church, which, in moſt places from the very days of the Apoſtles, prevailed, that the holy Euchariſt ſhould be given to none, but to them that were faſting: which thing was alſo decreed in the third Council of *Carthage*, and hath been obſerved ever ſince. And in this the Church hath, not without good reaſon, taken up the Cuſtom.

For beſides that, the intemperance of them that feaſted before they communicated, did not only give ſcandal to the Religion, but did infinitely indiſpoſe them that came, and diſhonour the Divine Myſteries; and ſuch feaſtings would for ever be a temptation and a ſnare, and therefore could not be cured ſo well, as by taking the occaſion away; beſides theſe things, the Church obſerved, that in the time of the Synagogue, the Servants of God did religiouſly abſtain from meat and drink upon all their ſolemn feaſt-days, till their great Offices of Religion were finiſhed; and that upon this account, the Jews were ſcandalized at the Diſciples for eating the ears of Corn early on the Sabbath; and Chriſt excuſed them only upon the reaſon of their hunger, that is, upon neceſſity of charity, and after all, even by natural reaſon and experience we find, that they pray and worſhip beſt, who are not laden with meat and drink; and that therefore this ſolemnity, being the greateſt Worſhip of God in the whole Religion, conſequently

ought to be done with all advantages; it was therefore very reaſonable, that the Church took up this cuſtom; and therefore they who cauſeleſsly do prevaricate it, ſhall bear their own burden, and are beſt reproved by St. *Paul's* words, *We have no ſuch cuſtom, nor the Churches of God.* But ſick people and the weak, are as readily to be excuſed in this thing, as the Apoſtles were by Chriſt in the caſe before-mentioned: For neceſſity and charity, are to be preferred before ſuch ceremonies and circumſtances of addreſs.

1. When you awake in the morning of your Communion-day, give God thanks particularly that he hath bleſſed thee with ſo bleſſed an opportunity of receiving the Symbols of pardon, the miniſtry of the Spirit, the Sacrament of Chriſt himſelf, the Seed of immortality, and the Antepaſt of Heaven; and haſten earlier out of your bed: The Cock crowing that morning, is like the noiſe that is made of the coming of the Bridegroom, and therefore go out to meet him, but riſe, that you may trim up your Lamp. When you are up, preſently addreſs yourſelf to do ſuch things, as you would willingly be found doing when the Bridegroom calls, and you are to appear before him, to hear your final ſentence.

2. Make a general confeſſion of your ſins, and be very much humbled in the ſenſe and apprehenſion of them. Compare the ſtate and union of all your evils, with the ſtate and grandeur of that favour which God intends that day to conſign to you; and then think what you are, and what God

is; what you have done, and what God intends to do; how ill you have deſerved, and yet how graciouſly you are dealt with. And conſider what an infinite diſtance there is between that ſtate which you have deſerved, and that good which you are to have; by conſidering how intolerable your caſe would have been, if God had dealt with you as you deſerve, and as he hath dealt with very many, who ſinned no more than you have done; and yet in what felicities you are placed by the mercies of your good God; that you are in hopes, and in the methods, and in the participations of pardon and eternal life.

3. The effect of this Conſideration ought to be, that you make acts of general contrition, for all your ſins known and unknown. That you renew your purpoſes and vows of better obedience: That you exerciſe acts of ſpecial graces; and that you give God moſt hearty and ſuper-exalted thanks, with all the tranſports and raviſhments of ſpirit, for ſo unſpeakable, ſo unmeritable, ſo unrewardable a loving-kindneſs.

4. *Worſhip Jeſus:* love him; dedicate thyſelf to him: recollect what he hath done for thy ſoul, what glories he laid aſide, with what meanneſs he was inveſted, what pains he ſuffered, what ſhame he endured, what excellencies he preached, what wiſdom he taught, what life he lived, what death he died, what Myſteries he hath appointed, by what miniſtries he conveys himſelf to thee, what rare arts he uſes to ſave thee, and after all, that he intercedes for thee perpetually in heaven, preſent-

ing to his heavenly Father that great Sacrifice of himſelf, which he finiſhed on the Croſs, and commands thee to imitate in this Divine and Myſterious Sacrament; and in the midſt of theſe thoughts, add proportionable exerciſes and devotions, addreſs thyſelf to the ſolemnities and bleſſings of the day.

5. Throw away with great diligence and ſeverity, all unholy and all earthly thoughts; and think the thoughts of Heaven: for when Chriſt deſcends, he comes attended with innumerable companies of Angels, who all behold and wonder, who love and *worſhip Jeſus;* and in this glorious employment and Society, let thy thoughts be pure, and thy mind celeſtial, and thy works angelical, and thy ſpirit full of love, and thy heart of wonder; thy mouth all praiſes, inveſting and encircling thy prayers, as a bright cloud is adorned with fringes and margents of light.

6. When thou ſeeſt the holy man miniſter, diſpute no more, enquire no more, doubt no more, be divided no more: but believe, and behold with the eyes of faith and of the ſpirit, that thou ſeeſt Chriſt's Body broken upon the Croſs, that thou ſeeſt him bleeding for thy ſins, that thou feedeſt upon the food of elect Souls, that thou putteſt thy mouth to the hole of the rock that was ſmitten, to the wound of the ſide of the Lord, which being pierced, ſtreamed forth Sacraments, and life, and holineſs, and pardon, and purity, and immortality upon thee.

7. When the words of inſtitution are pronounced, all the Chriſtians uſed to ſay *Amen;* giving their conſent, confeſſing that faith, believing

that word, rejoicing in that Myſtery which is told us, when the Miniſter of the Sacrament, in the perſon of Chriſt, ſays, *This is my Body, This is my Blood; This body was broken for you, and this Blood was poured forth for you; and all this for the remiſſion of your ſins;* And remember, that the guilt of eternal damnation, which we have all incurred, was a great and an intolerable evil, and unavoidable, if ſuch miracles of mercy had not been wrought to take it quite away; and that it was a very great love, which would work ſuch a glorious mercy, rather than leave us in ſo intolerable a condition. A greater love than this could not be; and a leſs love than this could not have reſcued us.

8. When the holy Man reacheth forth his hands upon the Symbols, and prays over them, and intercedes for the ſins of the people, and breaks the holy Bread, and pours forth the ſacred Chalice, place thyſelf by faith and meditation in Heaven, and ſee Chriſt doing in his glorious manner, this very thing which thou ſeeſt miniſtered and imitated upon the Table of the Lord; and then remember, that it is impoſſible thou ſhouldeſt miſs of eternal bleſſings, which are ſo powerfully procured for thee by the Lord himſelf; unleſs thou wilt deſpiſe all this, and neglect ſo great ſalvation, and chooſeſt to eat with Swine the dirty pleaſures of the earth, rather than thus to feaſt with Saints and Angels, and to eat the Body of thy Lord, with a clean heart and humble affections.

9. When the conſecrating and miniſtering hand reaches forth to thee the holy Symbols, ſay within

thy heart as did the Centurion, *Lord, I am not worthy;* but entertain thy Lord as the women did the news of the Reſurrection, *with fear and great joy*, or as the Apoſtles, *with rejoicing and ſingleneſs of heart;* that is, clear, certain and plain believing, and with exaltation and delight in the loving-kindneſs of the Lord.

10. But place thyſelf upon thy knees, in the humbleſt and devouteſt poſture of worſhippers, and think not much in the loweſt manner to worſhip the *King of Men and Angels, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the great lover of Souls, and the Saviour of the Body;* Him *whom all the Angels of God worſhip;* Him whom thou confeſſeſt worthy of all, and whom all the world ſhall adore, and before whom they ſhall tremble at the day of judgment: For if Chriſt be not there after a peculiar manner, whom, or whoſe Body do we receive? But if he be preſent to us, not in Myſtery only, but in Bleſſing alſo, why do we not worſhip? But all the Chriſtians always did ſo from time immemorial. *No man eats this fleſh, unleſs he firſt adores*, ſaid St. *Auſtin: For the wiſe Men and the Barbarians did worſhip this Body in the Manger with very much fear and reverence: let us therefore, who are Citizens of Heaven, at leaſt not fall ſhort of the* Barbarians. *But thou ſeeſt him not in the Manger, but on the Altar; and thou beholdeſt him not in the Virgin's arms, but repreſented by the Prieſt, and brought to thee in Sacrifice by the Holy Spirit of God.* So *St. Chryſoſtom* argues; and accordingly this reverence is practiſed by the Churches of the *Eaſt*, and *Weſt*,

and *South;* by the Chriſtians of *India;* by all the *Greeks,* as appears in their Anſwer to the Cardinal of *Guiſe;* by all the *Lutheran* Churches; by all the World, ſays *Eraſmus:* only now of late ſome have excepted themſelves. But the Church of *England* chooſes to follow the perſon and piety of the thing itſelf, the example of the primitive Church, and the conſenting voice of *Chriſtendom. And if it be irreverent to ſit in the ſight and before the face of him whom you ought to revere; how much more in the preſence of the living God, where the Angel, the Preſident of Prayer, does ſtand, muſt it needs be a more irreligious thing to ſit, unleſs we ſhall upbraid to God, that our Prayers to him have wearied us?* It is the Argument of *Tertullian.* To which many of the Fathers add many other fair inducements, but I think they cannot be neceſſary to be produced here; becauſe all Chriſtians generally kneel, when they ſay their Prayers, and when they bleſs God; and I ſuppoſe no man communicates, but he does both: and therefore needs no other inducement to perſuade him to kneel; eſpecially ſince Chriſt himſelf, and St. *Stephen,* and the Apoſtle St. *Paul,* uſed that poſture in their *devotions,* that or lower; for St. *Paul* kneeled upon the ſhore; and our Lord himſelf fell proſtrate on the Earth. But to them that refuſe, I ſhall only uſe the words of Scripture, which the Fathers of the Council of *Turon* applied to this particular: *Why art thou proud, O duſt and aſhes?* And when Chriſt opens his heart, and gives us all that we need or can deſire; it looks like an ill return, if we ſhall diſpute

with him concerning the humility of a geſture and a circumſtance.

11. When thou doſt receive thy Lord, do thou alſo receive thy Brother into thy heart, and into thy bowels. Thy Lord relieves thee, do thou relieve him; and never communicate, but be ſure to give thy Alms for one part of thy offering. St. *Cyprian* does with ſome vehemency, upbraid ſome wealthy perſons in his time, who came to the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, and neglected the *Corban*, or the miniſtering to the Saints. Remember, that by mercy to the Poor, the ſentence of dooms-day ſhall be declared; becauſe what we do to them, we do to Chriſt; and who would not relieve Chriſt, who hath made himſelf poor to make us rich? and what time is ſo ſeaſonable to feed the Members of Chriſt, as that, when he gives his body to feed us, and that, when his Members are met together to confeſs, to celebrate, to remember, and to be joined in their head, and to one another? In ſhort, the Church always hath uſed at that time to be liberal to her Poor; and that being ſo ſeaſonable and bleſſed an opportunity, and of itſelf alſo a proper act of Worſhip and Sacrifice, of Religion and Homage, of Thankfulneſs and Charity, it ought not to be omitted; and it can have no meaſure but that of your love, and of your power, and the other accidents of your life and your Religion.

12. As ſoon as ever you have taken the Holy Elements into your mouth and ſtomach, remember that you have taken Chriſt into you, after a manner indeed which you do not underſtand, but to

all purpoſes of bleſſing and holineſs, if you have taken him at all. And now conſider, that he who hath given you his Son, with him will give you all things elſe: therefore repreſent to God, through Jeſus Chriſt, all your needs, and the needs of your relatives: ſignify to him the condition of your ſoul; complain of your infirmities; pray for help againſt your enemies; tell him of your griefs, repreſent your fears, your hopes, and your deſires. But it is alſo the great Sacrifice of the World, which you have then aſſiſted in, and repreſented; and now you being joined to Chriſt, are admitted to intercede for others, even for all mankind, in all neceſſities, and in all capacities; pray therefore for all for whom Chriſt died; eſpecially for all that communicate that day, for all that deſire it; that their prayers and yours, being united to the interceſſion of your Lord, may be holy and prevail.

13. After you have given thanks, and finiſhed your private and the public Devotions, go home, but do not preſently forget the Solemnity, and ſink from the ſublimity of Devotion and Myſtery, into a ſecular converſation, like a falling ſtar, from brightneſs into dirt. The *Ethiopians* would not ſpit that day they had communicated, thinking they might diſhonour the Sacrament, if before the conſumption of the Symbols, they ſhould ſpit: but although they meant reverence, yet they expreſſed it ill. It was better which was reported of St. *Margaret*, a Daughter of the King of *Hungary*, that the day before ſhe was to communicate, ſhe faſted with bread and water: and after the Com-

munion, ſhe retired herſelf till the evening, ſpending the day in meditations, prayers and thankſgiving, and at night ſhe ate her meal. Her employment was very well fitted to the day, but for her meal, it is all one when ſhe ate it, ſo that by eating, or abſtaining, ſhe did advantage to her ſpiritual employment. But they that, as ſoon as the office is finiſhed, part with Chriſt, and carry their mind away to other intereſts, have a ſuſpicious indifferency to the things of God. They have brought their Lord into the houſe, and themſelves ſlipt out at the back-door; otherwiſe does the Spouſe entertain her beloved Lord, *I found him whom my ſoul loveth, I held him, and would not let him go.* He that conſiders the advantages of Prayer, which every faithful ſoul hath upon a Communion-day, will not eaſily let them ſlip, but tell all his ſad ſtories to his Lord, and make all his wants known; and as *Jacob* to the Angel, *will not let him go till he hath given a bleſſing.* Upon a Communion-day, Chriſt, who is the beloved of the Soul, is gone to reſt, and every ſecular employment, that is not neceſſary and part of duty, and every earthly thought does *waken our Beloved before he pleaſe;* let us take heed of that.

14. But what we do by Devotion and ſolemn Religion that day, we muſt do every day; by the material practice of virtues we muſt verify all our holy vows and promiſes; we muſt keep our hearts curiouſly; reſtrain our paſſions powerfully; every day proceed in the mortification of our angers and deſires; in the love of God, and of our Neigh-

bours, and in the patient toleration of all injuries which men offer, and all the evil by which God will try us. Let not drunkenneſs enter, or evil words go forth of that mouth, through which our Lord himſelf hath paſſed. The Heathens uſed to be drunk at their Sacrifices, but by this Sacrifice Euchariſtical, it is intended we ſhould be filled with the Spirit. If we have communicated worthily, we have given ourſelves to Chriſt; we have given him all our Liberty and our life, our bodies and our ſouls, our actions and our paſſions, our affections and our faculties, what we are, and what we have, and in exchange have received him; and we may ſay with St. *Paul, I live: yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me.* So that we muſt live no more unto the world, but unto God; and having fed upon Manna, let us not long to return to *Egypt* to feed on Garlic. *For as when men have drunk wine largely, the mind is free, and the heart at liberty from care: ſo when we have drunk the blood of Chriſt, the cup of our ſalvation, the chains of the old man are diſunited, and we muſt forget our ſecular converſation.* So St. *Cyprian*: But the ſame precept is better given by St. *Paul, But the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them and roſe again. Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſſed away, behold all things are become new.* He that hath communicated, and does not afterwards live by the meaſures of that day's duty, hath but acted a ſcene of Reli-

gion, but himſelf ſhall dearly pay the price of the pompous and ſolemn hypocriſy.

Remember that he is ſick, who is not the better for the Bread he eats; and if thou doſt not by the aids of Chriſt, whom thou haſt received, ſubdue thy paſſion and thy ſin, thou haſt eaten the Bread of idleneſs; for ſo (ſaith St. *Hierom*) does every one, who when he hath taken of the Sacrifice of the Lord's Body, does not perſevere in good works, imitating that *in deed*, which he hath celebrated in *myſtery*. Let us take heed; for the Angels are preſent in theſe myſteries, to wait upon their Lord and ours: and it is a matter of great caution which was ſaid by *Vincentius Ferrerius:* The Angels that aſſiſt at this Sacrament, would kill every unworthy Communicant; unleſs the Divine mercy and long ſufferance, did cauſe them to forbear a ſpeedy execution, that the bleſſed Sacrament might acquire its intention, and become a Savour of life unto us.

## Section III.—*Acts of Virtues and Graces relative to the Myſtery, to be uſed before or at the Celebration of the Divine Sacrament.*

### 1. The Addreſs.

*IT is well, O ſweeteſt Saviour Jeſus, it is very well, that thou art pleaſed to be a daily Sacrifice for us, and to become our daily ſuperſubſtantial bread to feed our ſouls. Certain it is, that we, by our daily failings, and the remaining*

*pollution of our ſins, frequently ſink down into the bottom of thy diſpleaſure. But do thou grant, that being refreſhed by the Sacrament, and recreated by thy Grace, ſtrengthened by thy Spirit, and comforted with thy miraculous ſweetneſs, my heart and my affections may be lifted up on high.*

II.

*O grant that by thee my ſoul may be lifted up to thee, and from herſelf may paſs into thee, with a pure mind, with an unfeigned Religion, with an unblameable faith, and burning devotion; with filial piety, and a profound reverence. For thou art the true God, the Word of Life, the bright Image and Splendour of thy Father's Glory, the Reward of Saints, and the Lord of Angels, the brightneſs of an eternal light, the unſpotted mirror of eternal purity.*

## An Act of Love.

*Thee alone, O Lord, my ſoul deſires, thou art eternal ſweetneſs in my ſoul. If the perfume of thy ointment be ſufficient to all the World, what is the refection of thy Table? If we live by every word proceeding out of thy mouth, what felicity and joy is it to live upon thee the eternal Word, chewing thee by Faith, and digeſting thee by love, and entertaining thee in our hearts for ever? How ſhall not my bowels melt into thee the Sun of Righteouſneſs? How is it that I do not forget all deliciouſneſs beſides thee?*

*A ſingle pleaſure, poor and empty, wearying and unſatisfying, hath often made me to forget thee. Now*

*that thou art truly and effectively present with me, how can any other pleasure in the world seem pleasant to me any more? I will forget all the world, I will quit all the world to live on thee, if thou pleasest, O dearest Saviour; but do thou open thy Ark and Repositories of sweetness, and fill my soul and all my desires, that there may be no room for anything else.*

*Thou hast called unto me to open my hand, and thou wouldest fill it: But I would not open it; I held the world fast, and kept my hand shut, and would not let it go. But do thou open it for me; not my hand only, but my mouth; not my mouth, but my heart also.*

## An Act of Desire after Jesus.

*O blessed Jesus, that hast said,* It is thy delight to be with the sons of men: *Thou hast made thyself the Companion of our journeys, the light of our ignorance, the remedy of our infirmity. Dwell with me, sweetest Saviour, and delight in me. It is no small thing I ask; O my God, can it ever be, that my God should delight in me? That's too much, O God! Grant that I may delight in thee, and do thou delight to pardon me, to sanctify and to save me.*

*Grant that I may never offend thee, that I may never grieve thy Holy Spirit, that I may not provoke the Angel of the everlasting Covenant to anger. But thou delightest in the works of thy hand, in the graces of the Spirit, in thy own excellencies and glories. Endue me with thy graces; fill me with thy excellencies; let me communicate of thy Spirit; and then enjoy*

*these thy delights with thy servants; for thou canst not else delight in me. Thou art thy own essential joy, and everlasting blessedness, and inseparable felicity: But this thou hast said, that thou delightest to be with the sons of men, because thou truly lovest us. Blessed be thy Name for ever and ever.*

## An Act of Thanksgiving.

*O blessed Saviour Jesus, I adore the secrets of thy eternal wisdom, I admire the mysteriousness of our salvation, and I love, and praise, and give all possible thanks to thee, the Author of our spiritual life, the Deliverer that came out of* Sion, *the Redeemer of thy People, the Spoiler of all Spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, the Conqueror over sin and death, the Triumpher over Devils; thou hast taken from our strongest Enemies all their Armour, and divided the spoil. Grant that I may know nothing but thee, account all things loss in comparison of thee, and endeavour to be made conformable to thee, in the imitation of thy actions and obedience of thy Laws; in the fellowship of thy sufferings, in the communion of thy graces, and participation of thy glories; that beginning here to praise thy Name, according as I can, I may hereafter for ever rehearse and adore thy excellencies, according to the measures of glory, for ever and ever.* Amen.

## Ejaculations and Meditations to be used at any time: but particularly after the Consecration of the Symbols, when the Holy Man that Ministers is bringing the Sacrament.

1. *O Holy Jesu, I behold thee stretched upon the Cross, with thy Arms spread, ready to embrace and receive all Mankind into thy bosom.*

2. *I come, Lord Jesus, I come; O take me to thee, in the comprehensions of an unalterable, of an everlasting love: for thou hast opened thy heart, as well as thine arms, and hast prepared a lodging place for me in the seat of love.*

3. *I see thy Symbols, the Holy Bread, and the Blessed Cup; but I also contemplate thy Authority establishing these Rites; I adore thy wisdom, who hast made these Mysteries like thy own infancy; I see thyself wrapped up in swaddling clothes, and covered with a veil: I hear thy voice blessing these Symbols, thy mercy reaching out my pardon, thy Holy Spirit sanctifying my spirit, thy blessed self making intercession for me at the eternal Altar in the Heavens.*

4. *Thy infinite arm of mercy is reached unto us, and our arm of Faith reaches unto thee: Blessed be Jesus, who will be joined unto his Servants.*

5. *This is thy Body, O blessed Saviour Jesus, and this is thy Blood, but these are not thy Wounds. My Lord hath the smart, but we the ease; his were the sufferings, but ours the mercy; he felt the load of stripes, but from thence a holy balm did flow upon us:*

*He felt the thorns, but we ſhall have the Crown: and after he had paid the price, we got the purchaſe, Holy Jeſus! Bleſſed be God.*

6. *I adore thy unſpeakable goodneſs; I delight in thy unmeaſurable mercy; I rejoice in thy Croſs; I deſire to know nothing but the Lord Jeſus, and him crucified.* O let the power of thy Croſs *prevail againſt all the powers of darkneſs, let* the wiſdom of thy Croſs *make me wiſe unto ſalvation: let* the peace of thy Croſs *reconcile me to thy eternal Father, and bring to me peace of Conſcience: let* the victory of thy Croſs *mortify all my evil and corrupt affections: let* the triumph of thy Croſs *lead me on to a ſtate of holineſs, that I may ſin no more, but in all things pleaſe thee, and in all things ſerve thee, and in all things glorify thee.*

7. *Great and infinite are thy glories; infinite and glorious are thy mercies; who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, and yet humbleth himſelf, to behold the things that are in Heaven and Earth? Heaven itſelf does wholly miniſter to our ſalvation; God takes care of us, God loves us firſt. God will not ſuffer us to periſh, but employs all his Attributes for our good. The Son of God dies for us: the Holy Spirit deſcends upon us, and teaches us: the Angels miniſter to us: the Sacrament is our food, Chriſt is married to our ſouls, and Heaven itſelf is offered to us for our portion.*

8. *O God my God, aſſiſt me now and ever, graciouſly and greatly: Grant that I may not receive bread*

*alone, for man cannot live by that, but that I may eat Chriſt; that I may not ſearch into the ſecret of nature, but inquire after the miracles of grace. I do admire, I worſhip, and I love. Thou haſt overcome, O Lord, thou haſt overcome; Ride on triumphantly, becauſe of thy words of truth and peace; lead my ſoul in this triumph, as thy own purchaſe; thy love hath conquered, and I am thy ſervant for ever.*

9. *Thou wilt not dwell in a polluted houſe; make my ſoul clean, and do thou conſecrate it into a Temple, O thou great Biſhop of our ſouls; by the inhabitation of thy Holy Spirit of purity, let not theſe teeth that break the bread of Angels, ever grind the face of the Poor, let not the hand of* Judas *be with thee in the diſh; let not the eyes which ſee the Lord, any more behold vanity; let not the members of Chriſt ever become the members of a Harlot, or the miniſters of unrighteouſneſs.*

10. *I am nothing, I have nothing, I deſire nothing but Jeſus, and to be in* Jeruſalem, *the Holy City from above. Make haſte, O Lord, behold my heart is ready, my heart is ready; Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

When the Holy Man that miniſters, reaches the conſecrated Bread, ſuppoſe thy Lord entering into his Courts, and ſay,

*Lord, I am not worthy thou ſhouldeſt come under my roof; but ſpeak the word, Lord, and thy ſervant ſhall be whole.*

After Receiving of the Bread, pray thus:

*Bleſſed be the Name of our Gracious God: Hoſanna to the Son of* David; *Bleſſed is he that cometh in the Name of our Lord. Hoſanna in the Higheſt: Thou, O bleſſed Saviour Jeſus, haſt given me thy precious Body to be the Food of my Soul; and now, O God, I humbly preſent to thee my body and ſoul, every member, and every faculty, every action, and every paſſion. Do thou make them fit for thy ſervice: Give me an underſtanding to know thee, and wiſdom, like as thou didſt to thy Apoſtles; ingenuity and ſimplicity of heart, like to that of* Nathaniel; *zeal and perfect repentance, like the return of* Zaccheus. *Give me eyes to ſee thee, as thy Martyr* Stephen *had; an ear to hear thee, as* Mary; *a hand to touch thee, as* Thomas; *a mouth, with* Peter, *to confeſs thee; an arm, with* Simeon, *to embrace thee; feet to follow thee, with thy Diſciples; an heart open, like* Lydia, *to entertain thee; that as I have given my members to ſin and to uncleanneſs, ſo I may henceforth walk in righteouſneſs and holineſs before thee, all the days of my life.* Amen, Amen.

If there be any time more between the Receiving the Holy Body, and the Bleſſed Chalice, then add,

*O immenſe goodneſs, unſpeakable mercy, delightful refection, bleſſed peace-offering, effectual medicine of our ſouls; Holy Jeſus, the food of elect ſouls, celeſtial Manna, the bread that came down from Heaven, ſweeteſt Saviour, grant that my ſoul may reliſh this Divine Nutriment, with ſpiritual raviſhments and*

*love great as the flame of Cherubins: and grant that what thou haſt given me for the remiſſion of my ſins, may not by my fault become the increaſe of them. Grant that in my heart I may ſo digeſt thee by a holy faith, ſo convert thee into the unity of my ſpirit by a holy love, that being conformed to the likeneſs of thy death and Reſurrection, by the crucifying of the old man, and the newneſs of a ſpiritual and a holy life, I may be incorporated as a ſound and living member into the Body of thy Holy Church, a member of that Body whereof thou art Head; that I may abide in thee, and bring forth fruit in thee, and in the reſurrection of the juſt, my body of infirmity being reformed by thy power, may be configured to the ſimilitude of thy glorious body, and my ſoul received into a participation of the eternal ſupper of the Lamb; that where thou art, there I may be alſo, beholding thy face in glory, O bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus.* Amen.

When the holy Chalice is offered, attend devoutly to the bleſſing, and join in heart with the words of the Miniſter; ſaying *Amen.*

*I will receive the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.*

After receiving of the holy Cup, pray thus:

*It is finiſhed: Bleſſed be the name of our gracious God; bleſſing, glory, praiſe and honour, love and obedience, dominion and thankſgiving be to him that ſitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.*

*I bleſs and praiſe thy Name, O eternal Father,*

*most merciful God, that thou haſt vouchſafed to admit me to a participation of theſe dreadful and deſirable myſteries: unworthy though I am, yet thy love never fails: and though I too often have repented of my repentances, and fallen back into ſin, yet thou never repenteſt of thy loving kindneſs: Be pleaſed therefore now in this day of Mercy, when thou openeſt the treaſures of heaven, and raineſt Manna upon our ſouls to refreſh them when they are weary; of thy infinite goodneſs to grant that this holy Communion may not be to me unto judgment and condemnation; but it may be ſweetneſs to my ſoul; health and ſafety in every temptation; joy and peace in every trouble; light and ſtrength in every word and work; comfort and defence in the hour of my death againſt all the oppoſitions of the ſpirits of darkneſs; and grant that no unclean thing may be in me who have received thee into my heart and ſoul.*

II.

*Thou dwelleſt in every ſanctified ſoul, ſhe is the habitation of Sion, and thou takeſt it for thine own; and thou haſt conſecrated it to thyſelf by the operation of glorious myſteries within her. O be pleaſed to receive my ſoul preſented to thee in this holy Communion for thy dwelling-place, make it a houſe of prayer and holy meditations, the ſeat of thy Spirit, the repoſitory of graces: reveal to me thy myſteries, and communicate to me thy gifts; and love me with that love thou beareſt to the Sons of thy houſe: Thou haſt given me thy Son, with him give me all things elſe which are needful to my body and ſoul in order to thy glory, and my ſalvation, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

III.

## An Act of Love and Eucharist to be added if there be time and opportunity.

*O Lord Jesus Christ, the fountain of true and holy love, nothing is greater than thy love; nothing is sweeter, nothing more holy: Thy love troubles none, but is entertained by all that feel it with joy and exultation, and it is still more desired, and is ever more desirable: Thy love, O dearest Jesu, gives liberty, drives away fear, feels no labour, but suffers all; it eases the weary, and strengthens the weak: it comforts them that mourn, and feeds the hungry. Thou art the beginning and the end of thy own love; that thou mayest take occasion to do us good, and by the methods of grace to bring us to glory. Thou givest occasion, and createst good things, and producest affections, and stirrest up the appetite, and dost satisfy all holy desires. Thou hast made me, and fed me, and blessed me, and preserved me, and satisfied me, that I might love thee, and thou wouldest have me to love thee, that thou mayest love me for ever. O give me a love to thee, that I may love thee as well as ever any of thy servants loved thee; according to that love which thou by the Sacrament of love workest in thy secret ones.*

Abraham *excelled in faith*, Job *in patience*, Isaac *in fidelity*, Jacob *in simplicity*, Joseph *in chastity*, David *in religion*, Josiah *in zeal, and* Manasses *in repentance, but as yet thou hadst not communicated*

*the Sacrament of love; that grace was reſerved till thou thyſelf ſhould converſe with man, and teach him love.*

*Thou haſt put upon our hearts the ſweeteſt and eaſieſt yoke of love, to enable us to bear the burden of man and the burden of the Lord; give unto thy ſervant ſuch a love, that whatſoever in thy ſervice may happen contrary to fleſh and blood, I may not feel it; that when I labour I may not be weary, when I am deſpiſed I may not regard it; that adverſity may be tolerable, and humility be my ſanctuary, and mortification of my paſſions the exerciſe of my days, and the ſervice of my God, the joy of my Soul; that loſs to me may be gain, ſo I win Chriſt; and death itſelf the entrance of an eternal life, when I may live with the Beloved, the joy of my ſoul, the light of my eyes, my God, and all things, the bleſſed Saviour of the World, my ſweeteſt Redeemer Jeſus,* Amen.

## An Euchariſtical Hymn taken from the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, relating to the Bleſſed Sacrament.

*Praiſe ye the Lord; I will praiſe the Lord with my whole heart; in the Aſſembly of the upright, and in the Congregation.*

*He that hath made his wonderful works to be remembered, the Lord is gracious and full of compaſſion: He hath given meat unto them that fear him, he will ever be mindful of his Covenant.*

*His bread ſhall be fat, and he ſhall yield royal dainties.*

*Binding his Foal unto the Vine, and his Ass's colt unto the choice Vine; he washed his Garment in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.*

*In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees.*

*He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth, for the Lord hath spoken it.*

*And the Lord their God shall save them as the flock of his people, for how great is his goodness, and how great is his bounty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the virgins.*

*The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in.*

*He shall purify the sons of* Levi, *and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.*

*O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, saying,*

*Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.*

*The* Lord *hath said, I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away.*

*They that dwell under his shadow shall return: they shall revive as the Corn, and blossom as the Vine; the memorial thereof shall be as the wine of* Lebanon.

*The poor shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise*

*the* Lord *that ſeek him; your heart ſhall live for ever: for he hath placed peace in our borders, and fed us with the flour of Wheat.*

*For from the riſing of the Sun even unto the going down of the ſame, the Name of the* Lord *ſhall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place Incenſe ſhall be offered unto his Name, and a pure Offering: For his Name ſhall be great among all Nations.*

*Whoſo is wiſe, he ſhall underſtand theſe things, and the prudent ſhall know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them; but the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.*

Glory be to the Father, *&c.*

## A Prayer to be ſaid after the Communion, in behalf of our Souls and all Chriſtian people.

1. *O moſt merciful and gracious God, Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of glory; thou art the great lover of Souls, and thou haſt given thy holy Son to die for our Salvation, to redeem us from ſin, to deſtroy the work of the Devil, and to preſent a Church to thee pure and ſpotleſs and undefiled; relying upon thy goodneſs, truſting in thy promiſes, and having received my deareſt Lord into my ſoul, I humbly repreſent to thy Divine Majeſty the glorious ſacrifice which our deareſt Jeſus made of himſelf upon the Croſs, and by a never-ceaſing interceſſion now exhibits to thee in heaven in the office of an Eternal Prieſthood; in behalf of all that have communicated this day in the Divine Myſteries in all the Congre-*

*gations of the Christian world; and in behalf of all them that desire to communicate, and are hindered by sickness or necessity, by fear or scruple, by censures Ecclesiastical, or the sentence of their own consciences.*

2. *Give unto me, O God, and unto them a portion of all the good prayers which are made in heaven and earth; the intercession of our Lord, and the supplications of all thy servants; and unite us in the bands of the common faith and a holy charity; that no interests or partialities, no sects or opinions may keep us any longer in darkness or division.*

3. *Give thy blessings to all Christian Kings and Princes, all Republics and Christian Governments; grant to them the Spirit of mercy and justice, prudence and diligence; the favour of God, and the love of their people; and grace and blessing, that they may live at peace with thee, and with one another; remembering the command of their Lord and King, the serene and reconciling Jesus.*

4. *Give an Apostolical Spirit to all Ecclesiastical Prelates and Priests; grant to them zeal of souls, wisdom to conduct their charges, purity to become exemplar, that their labours and their lives may greatly promote the honour of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus. O grant unto thy flock to be fed with wise and holy shepherds, men fearing God and hating covetousness; free from envy, and full of Charity; that being burning and shining lights, men beholding their light may rejoice in that light and glorify thee our Father which art in Heaven.*

5. *Have mercy upon all ſtates of men and women in the Chriſtian Church, the Governors, and the governed, the rich and the poor, high and low; grant to every one of them in their ſeveral ſtations to live with ſo much purity and faith, ſimplicity and charity, juſtice and perfection, that thy Will may be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.*

6. *Relieve all oppreſſed Princes, defend and reſtore their rights, ſuppreſs all violent and warring ſpirits that unjuſtly diſturb the peace of Chriſtendom: Relieve and comfort all Gentlemen that are fallen into poverty and ſad misfortunes: comfort and ſupport all that are ſick, and deliver them from all their ſorrows and all the powers of the Enemy, and let the ſpirit of comfort and patience, of holineſs and reſignation, deſcend upon all Chriſtian people whom thou haſt in any inſtance viſited with thy rod: And be graciouſly pleaſed to pity poor mankind; ſhorten the days of our trouble, and put an end to the days of our ſin, and let the Kingdom of our deareſt Lord be ſet up in every one of our hearts, and prevail mightily and for ever.*

7. *I humbly preſent to thy Divine Majeſty this glorious Sacrifice which thy ſervants this day have repreſented upon earth in behalf of my deareſt Relations.* (*Wife, Children, Huſband, Parents, Friends, &c.*) *Grant unto them whatſoever they want, or wiſely and holily deſire; keep them for ever in thy fear and favour; grant that they may never ſin againſt thee, never fall into thy diſpleaſure, never be ſeparated from thy love and from thy preſence; but*

*let their portion be in the blessing and in the service, in the love and in the Kingdom of God for ever and ever.*

8. *Have mercy upon all strangers and aliens from the Kingdom of thy Son; let the sweet sound of the Gospel be heard in all the corners of the earth; let not any soul, the work of thy own hands, the price of thy Son's blood, be any longer reckoned in the portions of the Enemy, but let them all become Christians, and grant that all Christians may live according to the Laws of the holy Jesus, without scandal and reproach, full of Faith and full of Charity.*

9. *Give thy grace speedily to all wicked persons, that they may repent and live well, and be saved: To all good people give an increase of gifts and holiness, and the grace of perseverance and Christian perfection: To all Heretics and Schismatics grant the spirit of humility and truth, charity and obedience; and suffer none upon whom the Name of Christ is called to throw themselves away, and fall into the portion of the intolerable burning.*

10. *For all mankind whom I have and whom I have not remembered, I humbly represent the Sacrifice of thy eternal Son, his merits and obedience, his life and death, his resurrection and ascension, his charity and intercession; praying to thee in virtue of our glorious Saviour, to grant unto us all the graces of an excellent and perfect repentance, an irreconcileable hatred of all sin, a great love of God, an exact imitation of the holiness of the ever blessed Jesus, the*

*Spirit of devotion, conformable will and religious affections, an Angelical purity, and a Seraphical love, thankful hearts, and joy in God; and let all things happen to us all in that order and diſpoſition as may promote thy greateſt glory and our duty, our likeneſs to Chriſt and the honour of his Kingdom. Even ſo, Father, let it be, becauſe it is beſt, and becauſe thou loveſt it ſhould be ſo; bring it to a real and unalterable event by the miracles of grace and mercy, and by the blood of the everlaſting Covenant poured forth in the day of the Lord's love, whom I adore and whom I love, and deſire that I may ſtill more and more love, and love for ever.* Amen. Amen.

## Section III.—*An Advice concerning him who only Communicates Spiritually.*

THERE are many perſons well-diſpoſed by the meaſure of a holy life to communicate frequently; but it may happen that they are unavoidably hindered. Some have a timorous conſcience, a fear, a pious fear, which is indeed ſometimes more pitiable than commendable. Others are adviſed by their ſpiritual Guides to abſtain for a time, that they may proceed in the virtue of repentance farther yet, before they partake of the Sacrament of love: and yet if they ſhould want the bleſſings and graces of the Communion, their remedy which is intended them would be a real impediment. Some are ſcan-

dalized and offended at irremediable miſcarriages in public Doctrines or Government, and cannot readily overcome their prejudice, nor reconcile their conſciences to a preſent actual Communion. Some dare not receive it at the hands of a wicked Prieſt of notorious evil life. Some can have it of no Prieſt at all, but are on a long journey, or under a Perſecution, or in a Country of a differing perſuaſion. Some are ſick, and ſome cannot have it every day, but every day deſire it.

Such perſons as theſe, if they prepare themſelves with all the eſſential and ornamental meaſures of addreſs, and earneſtly deſire that they could actually Communicate, they may place themſelves upon their knees, and building an Altar in their heart, celebrate the death of Chriſt, and in holy deſire join with all the Congregations of the Chriſtian world, who that day celebrate the holy Communion; and may ſerve their devotion by the former prayers and actions Euchariſtical, changing only ſuch circumſtantial words which relate to the actual participation; And then they may remember and make uſe of the comfortable Doctrine of St. *Auſtin; It is one thing* (ſaith that learned Saint) *to be born of the Spirit, and another thing to be fed of the Spirit: as it is one thing to be born of the fleſh, which is when we are born of our Mother; and another thing to be fed of the fleſh, which is done when ſhe ſuckles her infant by that nouriſhment which is changed into food, that he may eat and drink with pleaſure, by which he was born to life; when this is done without the actual and Sacramental participation, it is called Spiritual*

*Manducation.* Concerning which I only add the pious advice of a religious perſon; Let every faithful ſoul be ready and deſirous often to receive the holy Euchariſt to the glory of God: But if he cannot ſo often communicate Sacramentally as he deſires, let him not be afflicted, but remain in perfect reſignation to the will of God, and diſpoſe himſelf to a ſpiritual Communion: for no man and no thing can hinder a well-diſpoſed ſoul, but that by holy deſires ſhe may, if ſhe pleaſe, communicate every day.

To this nothing is neceſſary to be added, but that this way is to be uſed never but upon juſt neceſſity, and when it cannot be actual, not upon peeviſhneſs and ſpiritual pride; not in the ſpirit of ſchiſm and fond opinions; not in deſpite of our Brother, and contempt or condemnation of the holy Congregations of the Lord; but with a living faith, and an actual charity, and great humility, and with the ſpirit of devotion; and that ſo much the more intenſely and fervently, by how much he is really troubled for the want of actual participation in the Communion of Saints; and then that is true which St. *Auſtin* ſaid, *Crede et manducaſti;* Believe and thou haſt eaten. *Adora Jeſum.*

FINIS.

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